

THE
TRACT MAGAZINE,

AND

Christian Miscellany:

CONTAINING

VARIOUS PIECES OF PERMANENT INTEREST.



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THE
TRACT MAGAZINE
AND
CHRISTIAN MISCELLANY.



TWO NEW YEAR'S DAYS; OR, WALK WARILY.

THE new year opened upon Martha Eastwood with gloom and anxious care when she was just of age. Her father was ill and desponding. Her only brother was struggling for bread, far away, among strangers. A dark cloud hung over the future; and poor Martha feared as she entered it.

She was alone in her small chamber. An open letter lay on her table. She knew every word the letter contained; but she read it again. It was from her brother Frank.

"Dear Martha, dearest sister," he wrote; "if I could leave London, I would not keep away from you now: but I cannot, without throwing up my situation, and that would never do. Besides, travelling is expensive; and I must not spend when I can avoid it. Ah, dear Martha, we little thought, years ago, . . . but cheer up; let us trust, and not be afraid."

JANUARY, 1853.

God will not forsake us if we do not forsake him. Our trials ~~are~~ meant to draw us nearer to him, and to make us feel ~~more~~ fully our dependence on him. He cares for us, dear Martha

"It will be a great trial, I know; but I think you should take courage to ask our uncle's assistance. He can help if he will; and surely, stern as he is, and angry as he has been with us all—I must say, without cause—he will not see his sister's husband and daughter driven to destitution. Tell him, dear sister, that I will hold myself responsible for any money he may advance, and will deny myself every gratification—even that of seeing my father and sister, till it is repaid. Before the end of the year, if I keep this situation, which I trust I shall, I shall be able to save twenty pounds. Tell him so, dear Martha; I would write to him, but I fear he would not take any notice of a letter from me."

We need not give any further extracts from Frank's letter. It contained something more, however, a post office-order for a small sum: all he had.

Five years before the new year's day of which we write, the mother of Martha died. Then Mr. Eastwood was comparatively a prosperous man. But the loss of his wife seemed to be the commencement of a series of adverse circumstances, which broke up his business, shattered his health, prostrated his energies, and cast his children upon their own resources. For a year or two Martha had earned a meagre subsistence for her invalid parent and herself, as a daily governess in her native town; and Frank, after many unsuccessful attempts, had obtained a clerk's situation in London.

There was one relative who might have assisted the sinking family; but a family dispute of long standing had alienated Mr. Locke—the uncle of whom Frank wrote—from his brother-in-law; and when Mrs. Eastwood died, all intercourse ceased.

Would he help now? An old debt, overlooked in the final winding up of Mr. Eastwood's business, had come to light. It was still legally due, and the creditor was resolved to enforce it. Some might have said that it was of light amount; but light and heavy are comparative terms; and to Martha, her father, and her brother, the debt was a very heavy, and, at that time, an insurmountable one.

Poor Martha! she folded her brother's letter, and put it into her desk. "Frank is right," she said; "I must conquer this rebellious, proud spirit; but——."

Martha opened her Bible; and the first words which met her glance comforted and strengthened her: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Martha afterwards remembered having, a few days before, placed a book-mark at the fifty-fifth Psalm, which accounted for the Bible opening at that place; but the thought did not occur to her then

* * * *

The new year opened gaily upon Martha's uncle and his family. The share-market was encouraging; and Mr. Locke had golden dreams that day. With a full purse and a brisk step he went round to his tradesmen, paid his quarterly bills (it was his way, he said, and it was a way his tradesmen highly approved), retired to his office in the town, and wrote to his broker, and then returned home with a light heart and pleasant aspect.

We must anticipate his return, however, by half an hour's space.

"Miss Eastwood, child, what brings you here?" was the first greeting Martha received after entering her uncle's house.

"I wish to see my uncle, if he is not busy. Can I see him, aunt?"

"Your uncle is not at home; but it will not be long before he returns, I dare say. If you particularly wish to see him," added Mrs. Locke, as she observed that her niece lingered, "you can step into the drawing-room. There are only"—your cousins, she might have said, but she stopped short. "There are only the young people there."

Martha silently followed her aunt. She had need of all the courage she could muster, and all the meekness too; for the cold, measured tones of her relative struck a chill to her heart. "Don't run away, Emily; don't lay down your work, Kate; it is only your—, only Martha Eastwood: she does not wish to interrupt you," said Mrs. Locke, hastily, as she closed the drawing-room door, and motioned Martha to a chair: "Mr. Locke will soon be home—you won't take off your bonnet, I suppose, Miss Eastwood?"

Martha faintly answered, No, and took the offered seat. Her cousins bowed stiffly, and uttered a few commonplace words. They scarcely knew their cousin—their poor cousin Martha.

Martha looked around her on the costly luxuries of that drawing-room, and thought of her father, his reverses, his privations, his renewed embarrassments, and of the time when, as she had reason to know, the proprietor of those luxuries

had been assisted by him in his first steps towards prosperity. It is hard, poor Martha, to bear this haughty contempt; but cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.

There was a French clock under a glass shade; and in that constrained silence, every tick fell painfully upon Martha's ear. She could not long have borne it; but before her nervous irritability had sought relief, as it must soon have done, in tears, the door opened.

It was not her uncle, but her cousin Henry, who entered: Henry, whom, years before, in happier times, Martha had nursed and soothed, when suffering from a spinal disease, which, though afterwards alleviated by surgical skill, had never been cured. Pale, sickly, stunted in growth, and slightly deformed, he stood now by Martha's side for the first time during many years.

"Martha, dear cousin Martha," he said, grasping her hand; "I am glad to see you. It is long, long since—but never mind: you are going to stay now you are here: stay to dinner, Martha; let us begin the new year in another fashion from the last. I am sick of these horrid misunderstandings; and so are you, Martha, I know you are."

"Henry!" whispered his elder sister, in a low monitory tone.

"You need not 'Henry' me in that way, Emily: I know what I am saying. Mother, dear mother, don't frown. I may not see another new year's day; and I know I am right. You will stay, Martha; be my guest this evening, dear cousin; there's to be a party, or something of the sort, I believe; but we won't mind that; you shall tell me the old stories again, and——"

Until now Martha could not utter a reply, her cousin spoke so earnestly and rapidly. "I would willingly stay, Henry," at length she said, in a low tone; "that is, I would gladly stay if I could, and if—— Yes, Henry, I am sorry that there are misunderstandings; but I could not stay to-day if they were removed. My father is unwell, and does not even know where I now am."

"Martha came to see your father, Henry; and you really should not work yourself up so," said Mrs. Locke; "you know, dear, that the doctor says excitement should be avoided."

"It is over, mother," replied the young man. "I should have been glad if Martha could have stayed; but as she cannot——," without finishing the sentence, he relinquished his cousin's hand, and sank upon a couch near the fire. "This is my throne, Martha," he said; "but I am a feeble monarch, you see."

"There is papa," said Emily, eagerly; "suppose Martha were to step into his private room, mamma, as she wishes to see him." And poor Martha was coldly bowed out of the presence of her aunt and cousins.

* * * *

There was music that evening in that same drawing-room. It was a new year's party, and Martha's "fair and fortunate" cousins received the flattering attentions of the guests as their rightful tribute. Reclining on his couch was their brother. His infirmity released him from any further participation than he pleased in the gaieties of that evening, and he chose to be silent and apparently unconcerned. "Poor Henry, you must not mind him, you know, he is strangely wayward at times," his mother said, and so his sisters said. Presently he roused himself:

"I don't like your songs, Kate," he said; "I could sing a better myself."

"Why don't you then, Henry? You were asked to take the harp just now, and you would not."

"I have altered my mind then. Tell them to bring it here;" and Henry Locke raised himself on his couch. He had a fine ear, good taste, a master's hand, and a clear voice. "Hush! Henry is going to play."

"What shall it be?" asked Kate, with some sheets of music in her hand.

"None of that stuff. I have something in my head;" and as he spoke his fingers were on the strings.

"When the day is bright," he sang—

"When the day is bright, walk thou warily:
In the dusky night, step on cheerily.
Dazzled by the sunny ray,
Thou mayst stumble, faint, or stray;
Walk then warily.
When benighted and forlorn,
Every moment nears the morn;
Go on cheerily.

"Bless the welcome light, flowing over thee:
Shrink not from the night, though it cover thee.
Duties bring they, night or day;
Onward, homeward, lies thy way:
Press on warily.
Slack not for the noontide heat,
Nor from night's chill shades retreat:
Speed on cheerily.

"When the day is past, on, on, cheerily;
 Morn will come at last, though night dreary be.
 Hope, the star that does not set,
 Leads thee forward, cheers thee yet;
 * Onward warily.
 Be it night, or be it day,
 In thy homeward, heavenward way,
 Press on cheerily."

"What an odd song! where did you get it, Henry?" asked his sister; "though I need not ask you," she added, "it is one of your strange fancies."

"You are wrong for once, Emily. I have had it by me years and years. It is one of Martha Eastwood's: dear cousin Martha's." He caught the eye of his father as he spoke, and his own did not blench.

"Whose did you say that song might be?" asked Mr. Locke quickly.

"Cousin Martha's, father."

* * * *

A year rolls quickly round, whether its moments be lightened with joys or loaded with cares. Another new year's day is come.

To Martha the year just past has been a calm and quiet one. It began in dark and gloomy apprehensions; it has ended in thanksgiving for the past and hopes for the future.

To Martha's uncle it has been a year of losses and crosses, disappointments and sorrows. It began in self-sufficiency and worldly vanity; it has ended in contrition, we trust, and self-abasement.

There are friends this new year's day in his drawing-room; they are Martha and Frank; none besides.

The couch, we miss that; poor Henry's "throne;" and the harp whose strings he touched so well—we miss that too. He will never again seek rest from wearing pain on that couch, nor accompany with the soft tones of his voice the music of that harp. They are removed from sight, and the grief-stricken mother weeps afresh when she remembers how Henry said, a-year ago, "I may not see another new year's day, dear mother." He has been six months dead.

Mr. Locke is a poorer man, by some thousands, than he was a-year ago. The share-market has been depressed since then, and is still "going down." Those shares which the busy speculator last new year's day commissioned his broker to purchase, are worthless on this. If he had not soon stopped

short in his speculations, he would by this time have been penniless.

Frank Eastwood is beginning to prosper. He received unexpected promotion some months since, has saved more than twenty pounds, or he would not be here, and he has provided a comfortable home for his father and sister. They will soon follow him to London.

"I have much to say to you, Martha,"—it is her uncle who speaks in affectionate tones, "but I must not trust myself now. But tell your father, Martha; tell him, Frank, how I regret that we were ever separated in affection. The fault was mine; tell him that I say so. I have told him; but tell him from me again, dear Martha, how deeply grateful I feel for his sympathy with us in our sorrow—our deep sorrow. To you, Martha, once more I say, forgive me for my unkindness to you last new year's day."

"Uncle, dear uncle, why speak again of that? Your unexpected kindness the next day——"

"Martha, a-year ago this evening dear Henry sang, in his touching tones, some verses that you gave him, he said, years before. They went to my heart, Martha; and I could not get rid of them. All through that night, and the next morning, I could think of nothing but, "When the day is bright, walk thou warily." Ah! Martha, the day was bright with me then; and I was not walking warily. I felt that I was not. Those lines began to turn my heart to you, and now I thank you, most earnestly, for the lesson they taught me."

"The same lesson is better taught elsewhere, dear uncle."

"Yes; but I had never learned it before; or if I had, I had forgotten it, till it was thus brought to my mind. There are some so dull, dear Martha, that they must have line upon line, and precept upon precept, before they can understand; well for them if they understand at last."

The new year opened upon Martha with brightened prospects. She had learned to trust and not be afraid. Should the cloudy and dark day return—as it may, for she is in a changing world—may she have attained strength to bear, and faith to look beyond the cloud.

The new year opened upon her uncle with less dazzling brightness than did the last. He had learned not to boast himself of the morrow, because we know not what a day may bring forth. He has heard the rod, and who has appointed it; he has "humbled himself under the mighty

hand of God ; and should the sun of prosperity again shine warmly upon him, may he be evermore kept from saying in his heart, "My mountain stands strong : I shall never be moved."

G. E. S.

THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE.

TURN and look back upon life's pilgrimage. Some have travelled far, while others have proceeded only a little way. The path of all is strewn with memorials of Divine goodness, calling forth thankfulness and praise : nor can any one deny that the main business of beings dependent upon the Almighty Author of every blessing should be devotion and piety. Have you begun to attend to this paramount claim ? Is the service of God according to his revealed will your chief concern ? Perhaps with some many years are gone, and the principal matter demanding care has been utterly neglected.

Imagine an individual who has an important task assigned him to fulfil. The period allotted for it is a single day. Momentous consequences depend upon his conduct. And though a day may constitute the term, circumstances may arise to shorten its continuance. The weather may be unpropitious. Something may happen to prevent his working. He may be called away at any moment. Such are the conditions of his service, and he knows it. He is, therefore, urged to begin his work at daybreak—to begin as soon as he can see. He is assured by the master that the freshness of the morning is best suited to his task ; that the earlier he begins the easier will be his toil ; that procrastination is dangerous, because no one knows what may happen ere the day shall close. Suppose the sun has risen, and shone cheerily over meadow and field, woodland and brook ; that the third, the sixth, the ninth hour of day-light is come, leaving but a little space between it and eventide ; yet that the work is undone, uncommenced, untouched. Perhaps there are indications of a storm, or there is some one coming with a message for the servant to call him elsewhere. Yet nothing is attempted in the way of service. The man is in the vineyard all the day idle. Is this the case with the reader ? Is life's day far spent ? does the sun hasten to its setting ? Is affliction overcasting the sky, and death standing at the door ; and still is the salvation of the soul left uncared for ? We can conceive how the slothful one just imagined ought to be startled as he hears the clock strike the hour of noon, or an hour still nearer to that which is to finish the day for work. The opening of another year is to you like

the striking of the clock. What is the hour it tells? How much time is gone! how little is left! Yet your great work is untouched. There are, besides, admonitory circumstances. The sunlight which has invited you to activity is melting away before the coming shadows of the grave and death. Yet your work is untouched.

Look back over a shorter space—over the year gone by. Events of different kinds have happened. The condition of all men is chequered. None are so prosperous as to have no affliction, none so afflicted as to have no comfort. The extremes of unshadowed bliss and unrelieved misery are the conditions of another world, not of this. At all events; in last year's history you find enough to awaken gratitude to the Giver of all good, and enough to remind you that this is not your rest.

Let the Christian look back, and remember that events leave behind them nothing that is permanent save their effects on character; that character will produce effects which will run on through all elements. Let him ask what has been his religious history through another year. Have Christian considerations supremely swayed his course? Has Christian faith been alive and vigorous? Has Christian hope blended with and surpassed all other hopes? Has Christian love bound the heart to Christ, and to Christ's people for Christ's sake? What has been the moral result of the year? Has it been an increase in true health? Is that passage of Scripture applicable to it, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning?" Or have advantages been misimproved; and sermons heard, and volumes read, and sabbaths spent in vain? Have spiritual feelings been checked, plans of usefulness thrown aside, opportunities promising benefits to others lost, and things said and done entailing mischief which can never now be stayed or checked? It was a beautiful arrangement, under the Jewish dispensation, that both the civil and sacred year at its opening pointed to the Lamb of God; the day of atonement in the one case, the passover in the other, performing this gracious office. This arrangement shadows forth the Christian's resource amidst the sorrows of fresh repentance. The heart is not left to burst with anguish. In the mediation of Christ there is a healing balm.

As to the present, every Christian should inquire into his *position*, "Whereabouts am I?" A man walking on a turnpike road, with milestones beside him, can easily tell just where he is. A sailor on the Atlantic finds it not so easy.

Yet there are natural signs which may be consulted in the latter case, more certain than even the artificial ones in the former. The man looking at the milestones is like the tradesman looking at his accounts; the sailor looking up to the heavens and making observations on the sun and stars, is like the Christian measuring his spiritual progress. There are infallible marks by which he may know whereabouts he is and whither he is going. In what degree is faith triumphant over sense? and love over selfishness? and holy courage over fear? and spirituality of mind over a worldly temper? and self-control over passion? and purity over sensualism? Is duty getting easier, and temptation losing power, and inbred corruption growing weaker? Is the standard of Christian virtue, devotion, and piety more nearly approached? the apostles better imitated? Christ more closely followed?

Every Christian should inquire into his *dangers*. Evil lurks under many forms, and sometimes requires a quick eye for its detection. Each should ask, What are the temptations that most imperil me? Are they such as lead to avarice, or dissipation, or sloth, or pride, or scepticism, or revenge? Where the enemy is strongest, there let a double watch be set; particular employments have particular dangers. It would be well if every man, at the opening of a new year, whether his occupation be mercantile, professional, mechanical, or literary, would mark the quarter whence dangers are most likely to come to him. Some look very triumphantly in the direction where they are not at all exposed to attack, but turn their backs upon and see not the avenue through which the foe is actually pressing on that very moment to an assault. But temptations do not arise wholly from without. In our own hearts we have a dangerous enemy. When outer harmful influences are at rest, here is an inmate to be watched most jealously. It is deceitful above all things, and, therefore, in all our converse with it we must deal very faithfully, and in our interrogations be very close and plain and strict. One that has often deceived us deserves to be treated with suspicion. There is terrible truth in the words, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool."

Every Christian should inquire into his *duties*; what they are, and how they are done, if done at all; and if not done, why neglected. The family, the church, the world, must come in for a due share of consideration, and the responsibilities incurred in reference to each should be carefully weighed and measured. Christians should be ever guided by

the dictates of enlightened conscience, and moved by the impulses of sanctified love. Conscience is the law, and love the motive: do the blended powers of love and conscience animate us? If but feebly, then let us this year resolve to yield ourselves to their supreme authority. If we have too often rebelled against their government, let it be our steady purpose now to cease from that rebellion, and with dependence upon Divine grace, to become the loyal subjects of that empire which, if universally established, would comparatively make a heaven of earth.

In relation to the future we will limit our view to the present new year. Two suppositions may be entertained respecting it.

1. That you will live through it. Are you prepared for all that it will bring? It is laden with obligations; are you ready to take them up and carry them? to be diligent and earnest and faithful in the fulfilment of all social duties, all gospel precepts? Are you looking up to God for his Spirit to strengthen and bless you, cultivating a deep sense of personal responsibility, feeling ever in the Divine presence, and conscious that the secret of all holy service is the indwelling within the soul of Christ's quickening love? If hitherto a barren professor, one resembling the fig-tree with leaves only, are you determined that He who has spared you to see another year shall behold some fruit before the year is gone? Very fearful is the warning in the parable: the tree was spared on one condition, "If it bear fruit, well; if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

Are you prepared for its possible events—poverty, bereavements, sickness? One thing only can prepare you; faith in God, resting on his gracious providence, and looking to his Son, the surety of the gospel covenant, and the medium through whom a gracious providence is ever administered. To a man who has such faith no event can come amiss. Without it we are prepared for nothing. All circumstances will bring along with them a malign influence; affliction will only excite murmuring, and prosperity will only increase insensibility.

2. But take the other supposition: that the sentence is recorded against you, "This year thou shalt die." Are you prepared for that? A preparation for death is the same thing as a preparation for life. Those who are fit to live are fit to die. An unbeliever in Christ, a man destitute of the Holy Spirit, one who is without God and without hope in the world, is not ready for either. The humble disciple of Jesus, the

soul renewed by "the washing of regeneration," he who has thus become a child of God, is ready for both. "For him to live is Christ, and to die is gain." The exhortation to such as have secured this preparation is, persevere. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

But how will some answer the question? "Not quite prepared," you are ready to reply. "Not at all prepared," it may be conscience honestly whispers. Utterly unprepared for that event which above every other is momentous—that event which may come to-morrow—that event which will leave no opportunity for repairing the neglect of preparation! Prepared for everything, anticipating everything but that! Your accounts settled, your "house in order," your will made; all secular arrangements complete and exact: but the one thing which exceeds every other—as the heavens do the earth—not anticipated; the account with God not settled; spiritual interests not put in order; the surrender of the soul into the hands of a faithful Creator not made! You are prepared for all demands but the last. You have anticipated all obligations but the highest. Here prudence is at fault—so much at fault, as to make its exercise, merely in other respects, look like folly. Let past indifference to the one thing needful provoke shame and lead to repentance. "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

J. S.

THE BRIDAL PARTY.

It had been a snowy night, succeeded by a morning of dazzling brightness. Every roof, and tree, and shrub, was decked in radiant white, and not a spot or blemish appeared to interfere with the pure beauty of the scene. Mud and mire, brown, black, or grey, dead branch and withered leaf, brick and stone, thatch and hedge, ditch and stream, were all hidden beneath the crisp mantle that shone sparkling and beautiful beneath the beams of the morning sun.

"Cold, cold as Lapland, Norah!" said a gentleman, looking out from the door of a pretty cottage which stood in the midst of the snowy landscape; "but it will not hurt you if you are well wrapped up." And forth he stepped, accompanied by a young lady enveloped in a warm furred cloak and snow boots.

"What a morning for the wedding!" she exclaimed with a shiver; but, oh, how beautiful! how exquisitely beautiful!"

she added as she paused to look again on the white world around her.

"Is it not a most suitable robe wherewith nature has arrayed herself for the occasion?" asked her companion with a smile.

"It is wonderfully beautiful indeed," she repeated. "Look, there is not a particle of winter's gloom left upon a single thing; the very ends of the leafless sprays are hung with icy diamonds. It is almost a pity to step upon this pure lovely carpet; but, oh, I must beg you to wait a moment, dear uncle, I have dropped my handkerchief, it lies at the door there. Dear, dear, what a dirty thing! I must run back for another, this cannot be the right one."

"Take care you do not slip, my dear, there is plenty of time," said her uncle, and away went Norah. She presently returned, saying, "No, it is the handkerchief I had laid ready, of fine cambric; but it looked such a strange colour, I thought I had made a mistake: I beg your pardon for keeping you waiting, uncle."

"I hope you have not made a worse mistake and put on a dirty gown, Norah," said he gravely; "you know it will be a bright and gay assemblage this morning at our friend's."

"Dear, no, uncle, it is as white as muslin can be; but really —," and turning to the sunshine, she held aside the ample cloak to disclose the folds of worked muslin which descended to the ground.

"It certainly does not look clean, my dear," said her uncle, disapprovingly.

Norah was greatly disconcerted, for her dress looked something like pale dirty yellow, and the party she was going to join was the bridal train of a young friend and neighbour.

But after gazing for a moment in vexed surprise her countenance brightened again.

"Oh, now I know what it is!" she cried. "Don't you see, my dear uncle, that everything pretending to whiteness must look discoloured upon this dazzling snow, which not even the smoke of a cottage chimney has yet presumed to defile. My dress will look well enough among the rest, I doubt not; but how very stupid I was not to perceive what made my poor handkerchief look so badly!"

"Oh, is that it?" replied her uncle, drily. "Then come along, we shall see presently whether your laundress is in fault or not; but I hope you will not look conspicuously dirty."

Norah laughed gaily as she replied that no texture, nor

soap, nor skill, could produce anything to bear a moment's comparison with the whiteness of new-fallen snow. By this time they had reached their destination, which was at a short distance; and the good uncle presently saw his niece mingling with the happy group of young friends, as fair and elegant as any among them.

"Well, dear uncle," she said, as they met at home after the enjoyments of the day were over, "did you notice any peculiarity in the colour of my dress, after all your misgivings upon its cleanliness?"

"Nothing very different from those of the whole party, my dear. I thought you all looked dirty together, in comparison with the dazzling purity of the scene outside the house."

"It really was a most unfortunate morning for showing off our bridal costume in white procession," said Norah, laughing merrily; "but I never thought you would have taken so much notice of us, nor have cared so much how I looked, dear uncle."

"I notice and care about everything that concerns you, my child; and being invited to another bridal party, which I wish you to attend, it is important that the apparel in which you are to appear be considered carefully before the time arrives."

"Dear uncle, where can it be? It must indeed be important, for you to think of such a thing as dress!"

"It is the only party in which I am intensely solicitous about your appearance, my precious child," said he, laying his hand upon her head, and gazing fondly on the young face that was turned towards him with an expression of doubt and inquiry.

"It is to 'the marriage supper of the Lamb.' Is my Norah ready to accompany me there? Has she a robe white and beautiful enough to bear the scrutiny of the royal gaze when the King comes in to see the guests? It must be whiter than snow, radiant as light, whiter far than any fuller on earth can whiten it. Have you such a dress, my child?"

"I fear not, uncle," she said hesitatingly. "It is the garment of holiness to which you allude, and I know I am not holy enough to meet the searching eye of God."

"Then you could not attend that wedding party, Norah, without the certainty of being disowned and rejected by the Bridegroom, for no guest may tarry there in any but the attire which he has himself prescribed."

"I am sincerely anxious to be good, dear uncle. You do

not know how often I resolve, and how hard I try to keep my resolutions. I have begun to work for the poor this winter, and to visit them. I give away all I can spare. I teach the children at the school; and all these things are right, are they not?"

"Quite right, my dear Norah, and tell very well among your fellow-creatures. They are like your white dress, which looked clean enough among those that were no whiter, but which, contrasted with the snow, looked absolutely dirty. Compare your efforts after holiness, your good resolutions, your right actions, that you have just named, with the demands of God's perfect law, and see how they will look."

"I confess they will look, as my cambric handkerchief did upon the new-fallen snow, like dirty rags."

"Most true, dear Norah. Then we must give up the hope of spinning this bridal garment out of our own good deeds, must we not? Nothing we can produce is fit to present before God as a title to acceptance for the future, or in atonement for the past. Left to ourselves, we are in sorry plight for the summons to the great presence-chamber of the King of kings. Yet appear we must, to joy and blessedness, or to woe and shame for ever. Have you ever thought of this, my child, or is such a solemn theme distasteful to you?"

"It is interesting to me now, my dear kind uncle, from the manner in which you have introduced it, and I desire much to learn all you will teach me; but I know such thoughts have been too often dismissed as dull and intrusive, and therefore my heart cannot be really touched with the love of God. Tell me then how I may hope to be with you among the accepted guests."

"There is a robe, dear child, a robe of surpassing beauty, ready for all who, casting aside every other, really desire to be covered with it. It is a costly robe, too; for it is woven of infinite suffering and infinite obedience, wrought together by the heart and hand of infinite mercy and love—Christ's death as our atonement for sin, Christ's merits as our passport to acceptance with the holy God. To believe this, to appropriate this under a consciousness of our own utter helplessness and sinfulness, is to be saved. It is to array ourselves in the dress that will stand the gaze of heaven, that will shine in spotless beauty before the Sun of righteousness himself. Thus clad we may sing with the prophet, 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered

me with the robe of righteousness.' This, too, was the happy climax of Paul's ambition ; to be 'found in Christ, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Do you at all understand this, Norah ?"

"I think I do a little, dear uncle. It means that we must hide ourselves, as it were, in or behind another, and that only other is the Son of God. And to be in Christ is to believe that all he did was done for us, so that his work is as if it were our work ; and when God looks on us in Christ, he sees nothing of our sin, but only Christ's holiness. Is that the meaning ?"

"It is, my dear girl, only let your heart clasp what your reason apprehends, and you will be robed as I desire ; but it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. No creed, no theory, however scriptural, can make this righteousness our own. It must be implanted by the Holy Spirit of God in the heart that is brought under his influence. The materials (if I may use such an expression) of salvation are all Divine ; and no human meddling must be allowed to mar their all-sufficiency. God bestows and man is to receive salvation. Then the Bestower is honoured when the recipient acts out in his life among men the proofs of the holy influence which has acted savingly within."

"I see," said Norah, thoughtfully, "I see that I have made a great mistake for a long time past, and perhaps other young people may be doing the same. I thought that by trying to do good, and to keep my mind from wicked thoughts, and by being kind to the poor, God would be pleased with me ; and if I did unfortunately do wrong yesterday, I would make up for it by increased goodness to-day."

"You are not the first little Pharisee who has tried that plan, my Norah ; it is the religion of the natural heart. But it is in God's book alone we find 'the way, the truth, and the life.' You cannot by a life of penitence and tears blot out the guilt of one single sin. A patriarch experimentally said, 'If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.' And God's own comment upon self-dependent effort to put away sin is this : 'Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.' But the man who was taught by the eternal Spirit the nature and power of the true cleansing cried, 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be

clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,' said God. And how? Mark, Norah, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' The description of the redeemed is this: they 'have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' They are that beautiful bride, the Lamb's wife, of whom it is said, 'To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' See how the snow has covered up all the impurities and deformities of the objects on which it has fallen; so does the righteousness of Jesus, imputed to us, cover all the spots and blemishes which disfigure our best doings of whatever kind. Looking on us in him, God sees not iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel; but his people are perfect through his 'comeliness' which he puts upon them."

"It is very wonderful," said Norah: "how different from any plan we could devise for salvation!"

"So wonderful is it, that but for the grace of God we cannot really believe it. 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.'"

"But, uncle, a thought strikes me, whether foolish or not I must let you judge. This beautiful snow, to which the purity of Christ's righteousness is likened, is, after all, only a vapour, which has ascended from the earth, congealed, and fallen back again in another and purer form; so it is not a perfect illustration of that which is all Divine, it is of the earth still."

"Are you trying your ingenuity at an argument, Norah?" said her uncle, smiling. "I have no objection to meet it, however, though it is not necessary that a figure used to illustrate Divine truth be absolutely perfect under every aspect. Consider again, and you may observe that your remark only elicits another of the beauties of the simile. The vapour, of which the snow is formed, rises from the earth. So did the human nature of the God-man, whose righteousness is imputed to his people. He took our nature, 'was made in the likeness of sinful flesh,' rejecting, not its infirmities, but its defilements; and having in it fulfilled God's law, and paid man's penalty, he has promised to change our nature into the likeness of his glory, and to people with incorruption and immortality the world he has so dearly loved."

"I like that thought, uncle, and am glad that my objection caused you to remind me that Jesus is man as well as God. It brings him so close to us."

"It does, my child. He is man, with tenderest sympathies to feel, as well as God mighty to save."

"But one thing more, and I have enough to think upon at present. Tell me, uncle, if we cannot make ourselves acceptable to God, where is the use of those good works to which we are exhorted so earnestly?"

"They are the good fruit of the good tree, Norah. I did not say that they are not acceptable, when springing from the constraining influence of true religion in the heart. On the contrary, everything done for the love and honour of God's dear Son is not only accepted but rewarded. Even the most insignificant action arising from the right motive shall not lose its reward. But if done as a ground of merit, a plea for pardon, a bargain-making with an offended God, a million of good works are utterly vain in his sight. As the fruit on the tree, as the flower on the stem, good actions, sweet tempers, gentle words, kind charities should abound, to honour God, to bless our fellows, and adorn ourselves; but the richer the fruit, the more fragrant the flower, the less you will find it depended on by him who bears it, and the dearer is that spotless righteousness, the sweeter that lovely name that is reposed on for every hope, and pleaded for every mercy which cheers the just man's brightening path to glory. Now, good night, my Norah. Forget not the bridal day of God's chosen people, and seek that beautiful attire which will outdazzle the sun in his strength, and cast into shade even the white purity of new-fallen snow."

B. T.

KENARD CUTLER ; OR, THE UNKED HOUSE.

THIS is a pretty village, and, no doubt, when the sun shines on the tower and the scattered cottages, it is very cheerful; but the day is dark, and the wind is fitful and gusty. All fair weather would never do for us:

If I were not a stranger in the village, I should know the history of this old house, with its broken roof and ragged windows. It looks the very picture of gloom and desolation. The court-yard is overgrown with grass, the stone wall is broken down, and how hollow the wind sounds as it whistles through the damp, dilapidated walls! I never saw a more dismal dwelling. Oh! here comes an old man hobbling on two sticks. I dare say that he knows all about it. "Can you tell me why this house is left in ruins? I suppose you are acquainted with its history?"

"I ought to know a little about it, sir, if anybody does, seeing that I have lived in the village, man and boy, above threescore out of my fourscore years. My days must now be nearly numbered, for man is as the grass that withers, and the flower that fades away."

"True, there is but a step between us and death: but what of the old house here?"

"The less we say about it, sir, the better, though for the matter of that it seems to tell its own tale. I often think that every one who looks at it must give a sort of guess at the evil that was done in it. Better let it alone. There are some things that you can hardly talk about without seeming to rake the dead out of their graves."

"What you have said has only increased my desire to know more. Many years must have rolled away since the old house was tenanted."

"You are right there, sir; and many more are likely to pass before any one will live in it. But you shall hear a little of the affair. It is a long story, but I will cut it short. Kenard Cutler had two brothers, Caleb and Clement, and it was always said that, poor as they were, a great property was coming to them. Years passed on, and what was long looked for came at last. The property was theirs, that is, it should have been theirs, but Kenard overreached his brothers, and wronged them out of what belonged to them."

"That was sad. God's word forbids any man to 'go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter,' because 'the Lord is the avenger of all such,' 1 Thes. iv. 6. I suppose he had little good for his ill-gotten gains."

"Very little indeed. The loss of the property was hardly felt by Clement, for he was hardy and strong, and used to labour, so that he did not want it; but Caleb did want it, for he was a cripple, yet Kenard would not give him a sixpence. What made the matter worse was, that Kenard had always passed for a God-fearing man."

"Yes, that did make it worse indeed. 'Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' 1 John iii. 17."

"Poor Caleb, before his death, giving way to anger and bitterness, in the extremity of his distress cursed his brother."

"Ah! I am sorry to hear that. But how long did Kenard enjoy his ill-acquired wealth?"

"Enjoy it! I hardly think, sir, that he enjoyed it a single

hour after Caleb's death; he was a miserable man. His was a wicked deed, but I wish Caleb had not cursed him."

"And what of Clement? How did he behave himself?"

"His heart was hot enough, and angry enough; but God kept him back from cursing his brother. When Kenard had secured the property he took this house, in which he lived a wretched life, and died a miserable death."

"So it is: 'One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.—Another dieth in the bitterness of his soul. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them,' Job xxi. 23, 26. But did Kenard's conscience accuse him?"

"It did, sir, for it cried aloud with a mighty cry, and gave him no peace night nor day. He had quarrelled with his richer neighbours, and gone to law with them. How could he look for justice who had acted so unjust a part? He lost the day in all his law trials, and was stripped of the wealth he had unrighteously obtained. He might be said to be a beggar when he died. In his last moments his brother Clement went to him and forgave him, but he raved, and tore his hair, and said that Caleb's curse was heavy on him. Oh, sir, it is 'a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!' To have a 'fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation;' and well may we put up the prayer, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!' Num. xxiii. 10. Again I say that the sin of Kenard Cutler was great, but I wish that Caleb had not cursed him. It was a pity, but it was done, sir, in the agony of his soul."

"Yours is a melancholy story, and sets forth in a strong light the truth of the text, 'There is no peace unto the wicked,'" Isa. xlviii. 22.

"People say, sir, that Caleb's curse reaches even to the old house, which is called the 'Unked House,' on account of its gloom and loneliness, and the fearful character it has had ever since the awful death of Kenard Cutler. Two or three persons are at law about it now, so that it can hardly be said to have an owner."

"And what became of Clement, for I should like to see him? What do you know of him?"

"He is very aged now, and infirm, but having a trifle of money coming in from his savings, he lives a contented life, thankful to God for his manifold mercies to him. He still hobbles about the village, and now and then comes here to look at the old house, though through mercy he has been led

to seek after another house, 'a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' 2 Cor. v. 1. I, sir, am Clement Cutler."

G. M.

A SINNER AWAKENED.

THE circumstances related in the following memoir are of an interesting character, and seem calculated, by God's grace, to lead sinners at every stage of life to accept his mercy, and to encourage Christians in labouring and praying for the salvation of even the most unpromising.

During many years prior to his death, Herbert Badcock had been residing in London, and it is painful to add that those years were spent in the service of Satan.* At length, as he was one day walking through Holborn with a friend, he felt suddenly convinced of the folly and sinfulness of his past life. He could not at any time trace this impression to any outward cause. He always thought and spoke of it as the work of the Holy Spirit by a direct influence on his heart. But so powerfully was he wrought upon, that he stopped in the street, and said to his friend, 'O Bill! I have lived for fifty years in the world to myself, and have forgotten God.' He returned to his home full of anguish; and this thought, "I have lived fifty years in the world to myself, and have forgotten God," seemed to be sounding in his ears.

He now began to be much concerned about his soul and eternal things; but a sense of his ingratitude in having neglected God so long almost overwhelmed him, and led him to fear that his case was a hopeless one.

He had no Christian friend to direct or encourage him, and he knew not where to go or to whom to apply for the instruction he so much needed. He began to pray and search the Scriptures; "but such was my ignorance," he said, "that it seemed to me like looking into a hayloft." He did not know whether to look into the books of Moses, or the Kings, or the Psalms, or the New Testament, for what would be most suitable to one in his situation. He, however, confined himself principally to the books of Moses. There he saw somewhat of the character of God, as a God hating sin; but he saw no hope of pardon for those who had violated God's holy law as he had done, while all the parts relating to sacrifices appeared a mystery which he could not comprehend.

In this state of perplexity and anxiety he remained until he came into Devonshire. He first stayed with his brother for a

short time, and then visited a pious relative. Mr. Badcock asked him "how a poor sinner, who had lived fifty years in the world, and had forgotten God, could be saved. Do read to me; do pray with me." His relation gladly responded to his appeal, and read and commented on several suitable portions of God's word. Badcock was particularly struck with the parable of the Prodigal Son, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel, and with some portions in John's Gospel. Prayer was then offered, and during this exercise light broke in upon his dark mind. He saw and felt that it was only through Christ that a sinner could hope to be saved. He was also visited by a gentleman, from whose conversation he derived instruction and comfort.

He went back to his brother's residence. Shortly after arriving there, being in bad health, the writer saw him, and inquired into the state of his mind. He said, "I feel that I am a great sinner, and it seems to me that such a sinner is not fit to enter heaven." I directed him to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and reminded him of the declaration of the apostle John, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." He said, "My hope centres in Christ, and in what he has done."

On another occasion he said, "Whenever in years past I saw Christ represented on the cross as dying for sinners, I turned away from the sight, thinking, That is something which I cannot understand. Why cannot the Almighty pardon and save man without the interposition of a second person?"

As I saw that his mind was not quite clear on this fundamental truth (and I fear that this is a doctrine but imperfectly understood by the majority of men; hence the preaching of the cross is foolishness unto them), I endeavoured to explain to him why the Almighty could not, consistently with his justice, pardon sinners without the interposition of a second person. I told him that God had, for the regulation of our conduct, given us laws, which we had broken, and that, as a righteous lawgiver, he could not see his laws violated with impunity: punishment must follow the violation of just laws. Our sovereign, for example, or her representatives, the judges and magistrates of our land, cannot maintain the honour of the laws, or even act justly, if they allow criminals to escape punishment. This, I said, will apply in the strictest sense to the Divine Being, who is holy, just, and true; hence you may see the necessity for the interposition of a second person who will act as a substitute for the sinner. For it is evident that

if the sinner himself be made to suffer the punishment due to his sin, he can never enter heaven, but must be cast down to hell. To prevent this fearful consequence, the Son of God assumed human nature, became man, that by his sufferings and death he might ransom the guilty. God laid upon and imputed to him our iniquities, and treated him as if he had been the sinner, bruising him in our room and stead. Hence Christ is frequently represented in the Scriptures as bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, and so satisfying the claims of God's holy law and justice in our behalf.

"Now," I added, "all that God requires from us in order to our salvation is that as sinners we cordially accept Christ's work as undertaken in our behalf, and confidently hope for mercy simply through what he has done in our room and stead."

I shall not soon forget his fixed attention during these remarks. When I ceased, he said with eagerness, "Oh, I see it! I see it! I now see what I never fully understood before. My mind had been occupied with the inquiry, Why cannot the Almighty pardon sinners without the interposition of a second person? but I see now why he cannot: his holiness and justice stand in the way."

I then read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, where so much is said of the substitutionary nature of Christ's sufferings, from which he appeared to derive much profit.

The next time I saw him he spoke with great thankfulness of the interview I had with him when I explained to him the necessity for our Lord's sufferings. He said, "I rest for salvation entirely on the work of Jesus Christ." Tears fell from his eyes while with uplifted hands he exclaimed, "God's love to me is wonderful. He brought me out of London into Devonshire to learn all I know of what Christ has done for poor guilty sinners. Six months ago I was a poor lost sinner, but now I hope to be saved through Christ. Yes, I hope that God is reconciled for Christ's sake. His love to me is wonderful," he repeated. "Oh, what a mercy that he brought me out of London! Why, many parts of London are like hell upon earth. The greater part of the people live without any fear of God, or any concern about their souls, just as I did for fifty years. True, I was not like many of them; I was not dissipated, I was not profane, I was not accustomed to despise religion; but I did not love God, I did not serve God; I thought nothing about my soul. Oh! my sins of omission would sink me to hell for ever if pardon could not be obtained through faith in Christ."

I asked, "Did you enjoy peace of mind while you lived in the neglect of God and religion?" "Peace! peace!" he said with emphasis; "no! no! a man of the world has no real peace. Why, he returns from his parties and amusements, and is miserable. I had no peace, though to my companions I must have appeared happy, as I laughed and joked."

Be it remembered that this is the statement of one who for many years tried what the world could do for him. Do not, reader, seek your happiness in the world; it will disappoint you as it did him. Seek it in the service of God, and there you will find this invaluable jewel. Understanding the poet to mean the religion of the Bible, of which faith in Christ is the foundation, we say, in his language,

"'Tis religion that can give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
'Tis religion must supply
Solid comfort when we die."

But to return to my narrative. During another visit Badcock said, "I now see how vile I have been: now I hate those sins which occasioned the Saviour's sufferings. It was not until I discovered that I could not be saved but through Christ, that I felt the greatness of my guilt. But now I indulge in the hope that all my sins are forgiven through the blood of Christ, and that I shall be saved. I indulge in this hope because God has said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away;' and he has said, 'He that believeth in Christ shall be saved,' and I do believe in him with all my heart. I believe that he came down from heaven, and that he loved me, and died for me. I therefore hope to be saved, because," he repeated with peculiar emotion, "God has said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.'"

On another occasion I read to him the second chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. He said, "That chapter corresponds with my experience. Who should know better than I that a man is saved by free grace? Why, I had no righteousness of my own to plead; I had lived in sin, and had forgotten God for fifty years, when he called me. Christ saves the vilest who apply to him, and, as a vile sinner, I rely upon his promises."

When I again visited him he appeared very anxious about his wife and friends. He was desirous that they should all apply to Christ for pardon and salvation. When they were mentioned separately and collectively in prayer, he appeared

to unite most heartily in the petitions offered, especially for his brother. He had previously asked me to write a letter for him to a friend in London, and tell him what the Lord had done for his soul, and of the humble but confident hope in which he indulged relative to a better world.

When I next saw him he was very ill, and sinking fast; disease had made great progress, and it was evident that a few days would bring his probation to an everlasting close. I asked him how he felt in his mind. He summoned his remaining strength, and said with peculiar earnestness, "Christ is precious; he loved me; he died for me; he is my Christ; I have full confidence in God through the work of Christ." He said he felt assured that for him to die would be gain, and wished me to pray for his speedy deliverance. His bodily sufferings at this time were very great.

I saw him again the next day, that on which he died. He was unable to say more than a few words together. I told him that a gentleman with whom I had ridden in my way thither wished to be very kindly remembered to him. He nodded approval, and whispered, "Me! me!" I said, "Shall I remember you to him?" He said, "Yes." I told him that I had made that gentleman acquainted with the peaceful state of his mind, and the steps by which he had been led to look on death without any anxiety. He appeared much pleased, and signified that he hoped that the relation might prove of use to him. He now became so much exhausted that I requested that he would not attempt to speak, but answer any question "yes" or "no" by the movement of the finger up or down. I said, "It is a mercy that you have the use of your reason even now." "Yes." I asked if he felt quite calm and collected in the near prospect of death. "Yes." "Is Jesus precious to you?" "Yes." "Are you building your hopes for heaven on him alone?" "All," he whispered. "Then," I said, "you have no doubt that he will receive you into his kingdom?" "No."

After prayer I said, "I hope we shall meet in heaven." He said, "Yes." He then clasped his hands, and appeared to be engaged in earnest prayer for a few moments. And then I bade him what I considered, and which proved to be, a last "farewell." I shall not soon forget the grateful expression of his wasted countenance, nor the affectionate pressure of the hand, already become cold by the near approach of death.

In about one hour after I left his room, his spirit took its flight into the invisible world. His end was remarkably

peaceful ; not a struggle or a groan broke in upon the solemn silence of the dying hour.

Reflecting on this simple narrative, may we not ask, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" If we believe Badcock's own testimony, six months before his death he was a child of wrath ; an unpardoned, unconverted sinner ; and if he had died in that state he must have perished for ever.

He felt that his integrity and morality were insufficient to save him while his heart remained unchanged. He was mercifully led to see that the only way in which he could hope for salvation was through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Seeing this, he was taught by the Divine Spirit to lay hold by faith on the Saviour, and to maintain that hold until, as we confidently hope, mortality was swallowed up of life.

We have already stated in substance the ground on which we build our hope relative to his safety for eternity. We believe that he fully saw the insufficiency of his own righteousness and the all-sufficiency of Christ's ; and that while he abhorred himself and his past sinful course, he rested simply and solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ for salvation.

Perhaps, generally, little dependence can be placed on sick-bed repentance ; but be it remembered that B—'s concern for his soul commenced before he was laid aside from the active duties of life, and that he was an anxious inquirer after truth prior to his being laid on a bed of languishing and pain.

To all the readers of this narrative we would say, Do not in health neglect the interests of your souls. Should repentance be given when sickness overtakes you, you will bitterly regret having nothing but the dregs of life to offer to God, as B— expressed himself on this point.

Further, you are not sure that your life will be brought to a close by the termination of a protracted illness ; or if so, that you will enjoy the use of reason then. What wise man would put off sowing the seed till just as he wished to reap his harvest? Those who in their folly do this, often "sow the wind and reap the whirlwind." "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." To-day the Saviour says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. Is the Lord of all to wait your leisure, sinner? Beware lest in righteous displeasure he resent the insult, and say, "I

have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," etc., Prov. i. 24, 25. Oh, be persuaded to listen to the voice of Christ, and cast yourselves upon him for salvation; or soon, with the lost in perdition, you will exclaim, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!"

"To-day attend, is Wisdom's voice;
To-morrow, Folly cries:
And still to-morrow 'tis, when, oh!
To-day the sinner dies."

C. B.

TRACT ANECDOTE.

(*From the Diary of a Tract Distributor.*)

THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER READER.

HAVING on a sabbath forenoon gone out to distribute tracts, I observed in a lone spot, in a field, a man seated very intently reading a newspaper. I went to him and spoke on the subject of hallowing the sabbath day. The kind way in which he received what I said, and the seeming candour, teachableness, and good feeling manifested by him, induced me to spend a greater portion of time with him than I had intended.

He asked me several questions respecting the sabbath, to which I gave replies, according to my ability, and with which he appeared satisfied. I endeavoured to show him an example in his own case of man's general sinful conduct in departing from God, which was clearly manifest in his preferring on God's holy day a common newspaper, which only contained the passing events of a day, to a preparation for the presence of Him whose favour is better than life, and who had given us the sabbath on earth, as a means to prepare for the inconceivable and eternal pleasures of the sabbath above. This led me to speak of man's original condition, who was made in the image and glory of God; his fall, his depravity and enmity against his Creator; the necessity of his restoration by the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ, and the impossibility of his being happy in heaven without being born again of the Spirit; and that he was in the perilous condition of an unsaved sinner. The tears by this time fell freely, and silently folding up his newspaper, the man thrust it into his pocket, and eagerly inquired what he must do to be saved.

I had the lively satisfaction of telling him of the prodigal's

return to his father, as an example both for himself and me. This, and a variety of encouraging portions from the Scriptures, affected his mind so much, that he spoke with difficulty from the oppressed state of his feelings. I detained him a long while, endeavouring to pour into his apparently anxious soul as much information of the love of the blessed Saviour as he could bear, which, I trust, was acknowledged and blessed by the Holy Spirit, since the man wept freely and spoke little, while his bosom struggled with emotion. I then gave him a suitable tract, which he eagerly received, and earnestly promised to read it. After pronouncing many blessings on me, and pressing my hands firmly in his own, with apparent reluctance he took his leave. I was sorry that I had not urged him to call upon me, but I was so much overcome by the unexpected effect of my interview, that it escaped my mind to do so.

What became of him afterwards I know not, but this I do know, that the charms of the Sunday newspaper were at all events for that time swallowed up in the good news of the love of the adorable Saviour. The Lord grant that the good seed of the kingdom may have found an abiding place in his heart.

A. A.

THE PASSING YEARS.

WHILE, with ceaseless course, the sun
 Hastened through the former year,
 Many souls their race have run,
 Never more to meet us here;
 Fixed in an eternal state,
 They have done with all below;
 We a little longer wait,
 But how little none can know.
 As the winged arrow flies
 Speedily the mark to find;
 As the lightning from the skies
 Darts, and leaves no trace behind;
 Swiftly thus our fleeting days
 Bear us down life's rapid stream:
 Lord, our expectations raise;
 All below is but a dream.
 Thanks for mercies past receive;
 Former kindnesses renew:
 From this moment may we live
 With eternity in view:
 Bless the word to young and old,
 Shed abroad a Saviour's love;
 And when life's short tale is told,
 May we dwell with thee above.—*Newton.*



PASSING THROUGH THE RIVER.

IF the close of a day or of a year be attended with solemnity, how much more solemn is the close of life! Sometimes the end of our earthly existence approaches slowly, while at others it comes unexpectedly as a thief in the night. Happy are they who are found ready, and unhappy indeed is he who is taken by surprise.

So much accustomed are we to set forth one thing by likening it to another, that we rarely describe without a comparison. Again and again has life been represented as a pilgrimage, and death as the act of passing through a river; and many a dying Christian has exclaimed,

“ When I tread the verge of Jordan,
 Bid my anxious fears subside;
 Bear me through the swelling current,
 Land me safe on Canaan’s side.”

There is that which is exceedingly encouraging in the circumstance of a Christian pilgrim passing through this river without fear, and still more so when the river is passed triumphantly. Few can read Bunyan's account of Christiana's crossing the river, imaginary as it is, without a thrill of pleasure and exultation.

"Now the day drew on that Christiana must be gone. So the road was full of people to see her take her journey. But, behold, all the banks beyond the river were full of horses and chariots, which were come down from above to accompany her to the city gate. So she came forth, and entered the river, with a beckon of farewell to those that followed her. The last words that she was heard to say were, I come, Lord, to be with thee and bless thee. So her children and friends returned to their place, for those that waited for Christiana had carried her out of their sight. So she went and called, and entered in at the gate with all the ceremonies of joy that her husband Christian had entered with before her."

Such an account as this is as a cordial to the fainting heart of a timorous servant of the Lord, when drawing towards the end of his earthly career. He reads it, ponders on it, and prays over it and takes courage.

A careless soul may be heedless about eternal things, even on the brink of eternity; but when once a Christian pilgrim is awakened to a sense of sin and danger, and his heart melted by the love of the Redeemer, he becomes urgent for communion with his Lord, and his language is on this wise,

Call me, O Lord, and I will come;
My soul shall not say nay,
But through the strife that troubles life
Urge on her willing way.

Nought but thy love can e'er suffice
When fails my faltering breath;
I would be thine at any price,
Grief, sickness, pain, and death.

Come all that human nature fears,
Upheld by grace Divine,
I will rejoice amidst my tears
So that the Lord be mine!

When the end of life is at hand, and the river of death is approached by one who has to enter it naked and defenceless, with no sense of pardoning mercy, no precious soul-sustaining promise to support him, it must be truly dreadful. Well might one exclaim, "If, Lord, I am to be favoured with only

one hour of thy presence in my earthly pilgrimage, oh, let it be that which is nearest to eternity."

Little will it avail when we come to pass through the river of death what riches we possess, what honours we have attained, or what pleasures we have enjoyed. The past will be as nothing, and the present and the future will absorb our thoughts; but if we have fled to the Saviour for safety, the stream will not be suffered to prevail against us. In this case, without doubt we shall reach the other side in safety, and then will burst from our lips the song of thankful exultation, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.—Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," Rev. v. 12, 13.

G. M.

THE GOLDEN BELLS.

MANY years ago, towards the conclusion of war, an officer in the service of one of the allied powers on the continent rendered some important and personal services to a prince of the blood royal. The officer thought not of reward, but the Duke glowing with gratitude for the promptitude, discretion, and zeal, far exceeding anything he expected, or felt a right to demand, which had been exerted in his behalf, graciously expressed his thanks in person, and bade the officer consider him as a friend on whose interest he might depend if he could at any future time advance his wishes.

After the proclamation of peace the young man returned with his regiment home, and it was not long ere he resolved to marry and settle in life. The Duke too was at home; and now was a propitious time to remind him of his promise, as some appointment in his household or under government would be an acceptable provision for domestic happiness. Court uniform was purchased, and the lieutenant presented himself at the Duke's next levee. He was graciously recognised, and left the presence full of hope and expectation, and was warmly congratulated by his friends upon the notice of his illustrious patron. He then addressed a letter through his royal highness's secretary, expressive of his wishes, and in sanguine anxiety awaited the result. The secretary courteously replied, "His royal highness retained a lively recollection of lieutenant C—'s services, and regretted extremely that it was not in his power to promote his interests at that time, as he was on the

point of departure to a foreign court." The lieutenant was profoundly disappointed, but he found other friends, and soon settled down in professional occupation, to earn a competence, independent of a royal promise.

Years passed away and surrounded him with a large family of sons and daughters. Presentations to public schools, commissions, patronage, were all desirable, and an effort to secure something ought to be made, especially at a moment when the Duke was on a visit to his native land, was being feted and entertained everywhere, was highly popular in his regal relations, and certainly now had much influence and power. A memorial was forthwith drawn up, and, accompanied by testimonials military and civil, was despatched and presented through some noble friend who was supposed to add interest and weight to the cause. An acknowledgment from the secretary followed; his royal highness had received the memorial; but there was no answer to the request. The testimonials were returned on application, and the Duke's visit being ended, he again went abroad.

The disappointed applicant spoke bitterly of royal ingratitude, insincerity, and forgetfulness, and vowed he would never solicit a favour again. The papers should be destroyed, and the whole affair forgotten. A careful hand, however, rescued the packet from destruction; for, some day it might yet be useful. More years rolled by, and now the sons were attaining man's estate, and now their father was in the decline of life. His profession was not so prosperous as formerly, and he was weary of it. One day, in a family consultation upon some matter, the events of his early life were recalled; the great packet, with a huge seal bearing the royal arms, turned up amidst a mass of papers, and leave was granted to the young people to examine the contents. A unanimous conclusion was soon proclaimed that one more effort should be made. Their father need not take any trouble, it should be done for him, if he would only consent to allow it. Former times of application had been ill chosen, the terms had not been explicit; but now the noble Duke was settled in his own country, was the patron of everything good, and the president of many valuable institutions. Care should be taken to express some modest and decided method by which the favour could be conferred, and no doubt it would be granted. Besides, the case was stronger now, the Duke was growing old too, and could sympathize with age and infirmity, if not with poverty and privation. Sanguine persuasion prevailed; an application,

with greater care, precision, and humility was once more made, and once more old hopes revived. Time passed, and no answer came; the Duke was ill: when convalescent, something would be done. Still onward sped the time, and no reply. Then, suddenly, the court was ordered into mourning, the Duke was dead.

Great was the disappointment to both old and young; many were the comments and complaints of discontent or idleness, or filial affection. The parent might have been enjoying some government superannuation allowance by this time if princes kept their promises. The sons might have been serving their country by wearing her uniform and practising for review days, if princes were not ungrateful and thoughtless. Some hope might have remained yet for the younger children if princes did not die. But it was all over now, they should all remember that their father had the honour of serving the Duke, had been thanked for it, and that was all.

Then a friend, a Christian friend, who had been listening to such conversations, took a little book from his pocket, and read in a gentle emphatic tone, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

"Excellent advice," said the old lieutenant, "I hope my children will remember it."

"It is negative, however," said the friend; "let us remember something positive. I know a case in point; will you hear it?" All consented, and the friend turned to the book of Exodus, and read, "Thou shalt take two onyx-stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: six on one stone, and six on the other. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial. And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning-work. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, four rows of stones: sardius, topaz, carbuncle, emerald, sapphire, diamond, figure, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, and jasper: set in gold. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod

all of blue. And beneath upon the hem (or skirt) of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about. A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out, *that he die not*. And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and ~~grave~~ upon it, like the engraving of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it upon the forefront of the mitre; and it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord."

"This is the dress of the Jewish high priest. What has it to do with us, my good friend?"

"Contemplate him for a moment arrayed for his office. He having made atonement for the sins of the people by the shedding of blood, to bear the offering, as the representative of the people, into the presence of God upon the mercy-seat. He is to go alone. The names of the worshippers without are upon his shoulders and his heart. When God looks on him, he sees them also. But suppose anything be wanting to the completeness of the atonement. Suppose God does not accept it, then might the high priest be struck dead before the ark, and some terrible judgment await the people. How shall they know that they and theirs yet find favour before the Lord? They wait in anxious suspense. Some draw near to that mysterious veil which curtains off the holy of holies, and—hark! the sweet ring of the golden bells is heard as he moves before the mercy-seat. The tidings pass to listening worshippers without, that he yet lives; that all is well, that Israel's sins are pardoned, and Israel's prayers are heard."

"That was all very beautiful: but again I ask what is it all to us?"

"It signifies everything to us. It foreshadowed Him 'who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God;' who 'by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption,' and now appears 'in the presence of God for us,' Heb. ix. 12, 14, 24. On his shoulders, the seat of strength, he bears up his weak and fainting followers whom he has left below. He is their strength and confidence, their support and protection. Engraven on his heart, the seat of affection, he bears their individual names.

He cannot forget one for whose sake he groaned in anguish under wrath against their sin. On his brow, in unsullied purity, he bears the badge of his earthly life, the stamp of every action, 'Holiness to the Lord,' and claims acceptance on the ground of his infinite merit for all who come unto God by him. And now, having such an 'High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God,' let us come boldly to the throne. He bids us ask, that we may receive favours and blessings. He waits to be gracious; he offers place and pension, provision and blessing, not for a few short years of work and wages, but for an eternity of rest and enjoyment. And now I may finish the paragraph with which I began, and add, 'Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.'

"Ah yes, that is all very right and good in the things that belong to another world, but you see we have to make the best provision in our power for the wants of this."

"True; and the best provision you can make is to obey the precept, 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' He who begs most earnestly the gifts of a heavenly Benefactor, is least likely to need the patronage of the world's great men; and having not only permission, but encouragement to make all our requests known unto God, our wishes and our wants, temporal as well as spiritual, it is very blessed to know that, when good for us, he gives liberally, and only when mischievous to us, denies or withholds. He is not too busy to attend to us, for amidst the mighty business of universal government, he takes notice of the sparrow's fall, to paint the petal of a flower, and to number the hairs on his children's heads. He does not forget, for he is the Friend that loveth at all times, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' and with him is 'no variableness, neither shadow of turning.' And though he is gone within the veil, though we cannot see him as he presents himself for us before the mercy-seat, yet faith listens at the holy place, and hears the music of the golden bells, and knows that 'he ever liveth,' that he is the accepted sacrifice, the ever pleading intercessor, and because he lives, his people live also.

"Your patron, my dear friends, was busy, and would not attend to your wishes; he forgot, and did not when he might, and then he died and could not. Am I unreasonable to commend to your affection and desires a Friend who is always ready in the time of need to act as well as to promise; who takes

no journeys beyond your reach, who never forgets, and who ever lives. If you seek his favour you will find it, and having once entered his presence for the first and greatest favour, pardon of your sins, you will gladly adopt the resolution of the royal psalmist, who knew his faithfulness, when he said, 'My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.'"

B. T.

THORNS AND THISTLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

SATIRE.

"WHAT delayed you so long, Alfred?" said Mr. Hatton to his son, as they commenced their usual morning walk in the country; "I have been waiting some time, and you are, in general, impatient until we set out."

"Indeed I am, papa, because I do greatly enjoy our rambles; but to-day I took up a book which amused me so much that, for once, I forgot the time."

"And what was the book that interested you so much, my son?"

"It was a collection of clever sayings, or witticisms, some of which were very diverting, and others so striking, so sharp, that I could not help envying the cleverness of the persons who said them."

"Can you repeat any of these clever sayings which excited your envy, Alfred?"

"I fear not well, papa. There were several anecdotes of an Irish barrister, and though he was certainly very satirical, still he was so witty and elegant at the same time, that it was impossible not to be delighted in reading them. I was also much struck with something that was told of the famous poet, Pope."

"Well, let me hear it."

"It was this, papa. Pope, and some of his wise, learned friends were once puzzling over a passage in an old book, but could not make out the right meaning. There was a young gentleman present who asked leave to look at it; and the moment he did so he made it out, and showed them that it only wanted a note of interrogation to be quite plain. Now, of course you remember, papa, that poor Mr. Pope was a small deformed man, and could not bear to have his being so alluded to or noticed, which was mentioned in the memoir of him which we were reading lately. Well! he was now vexed

that this young gentleman should find out what had puzzled himself and his learned friends; and so he said very crossly to him, 'And pray, sir, can you tell what is a note of interrogation?' The other looked at his ugly figure, and said at once, 'I can, sir. It is a little crooked thing that asks questions.' Was not that very clever, papa?"

Alfred looked at his father, and seemed disappointed that he did not appear much pleased with this stroke of wit, but said gravely, "And is it for the purpose of being able to make such keen retorts as this that you covet the cleverness of the persons about whom you have been reading, my son?"

"Then you think the gentleman was wrong, papa? but did not Pope deserve it?"

"Perhaps so. Still I think you will admit that the gentleman was wrong when you remember that the command is, 'Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing,' 1 Pet. iii. 9.

"That is true, papa, and if I had thought of it sooner, I should not so greatly have enjoyed the story."

"I believe you will enjoy it still less Alfred when you consider how entirely destitute this satirical answer was of that Christian love so beautifully described in 1 Cor. xiii. There was not only want of charity, but of common feeling in taunting a fellow creature with personal defects which were entirely beyond his control."

"I now see it in that light, papa," replied Alfred; "but please tell me, do you altogether disapprove of satire?"

"As it is generally used, I do, for I have not seen it produce good, and I would say of it in the words of our Christian poet,—

"It may correct a foible, may chastise
The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,
Retrench a sword-blade or displace a patch;
Still where are its sublimer trophies found?
What vice has it subdued? what heart reclaim'd
By rigour? or whom laugh'd into reform?"

"But, papa, will you not allow that strokes of satire, such as I have just repeated, require great cleverness?"

"Yes, Alfred, and I would warn you against coveting such a gift. Not that it is not of itself valuable, but because the possession of it is a strong temptation to a breach of the precept to do unto others as we would they should do unto us."

"Papa," said Alfred, "you are, I know, of opinion that every power of the mind and affection of the heart was

originally implanted in our nature by God, when he made man in his own image. Can this have been the case with qualities and feelings which hurt others?"

Mr. Hatton stopped and cut from the hedge a bit of furze covered with bright golden blossoms. "Look, Alfred," he said, "look at the sharp thorns which render it a service of danger to come near this fragrant shrub. From the discoveries of botanical science we learn that thorns are not, strictly speaking, natural to the plants on which they grow, but are simply the abortive representations of something better, even of branches which, if developed, would bring forth flowers and fruits."

"That is very interesting, papa: is it fully proved?"

"I believe it is, so far as to be a generally received opinion. The writer from whom I learned it, states that branches are produced in the form of buds, which are connected with the centre of the woody stem. But owing to various causes it is rare to find all the buds properly developed; many lie dormant, and do not make their appearance as branches: others are altered into thorns. That thorns are, in reality, undeveloped branches, is shown by the fact that they are connected with the centre of the stem; that they bear leaves in certain circumstances, and that under cultivation they often become true branches. Many plants are thorny in their wild state which are not so under cultivation, owing to this transformation. Thorns, as of the hawthorn, differ totally from prickles, such as occur in the rose. The latter are merely connected with the surface of the plant, and are considered as an altered condition of the hairs, which become hardened in their structure. In the curse which God pronounced on the soil when man fell, he said, 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.' May we not see in this production of thorns, an arrestment, by the fiat of the Almighty, of the formation of branches, and thus a standing memorial or emblem of the effects of sin on what was declared at first to be very good?"

"I thank you for telling me this, papa, it is curious and interesting."

"It is," said Mr. Hatton, "and I think it is an apt illustration of the fact that our evil qualities and passions are perversions of what was originally right. Alas! we are but too prone to use our finest intellectual gifts, not to the glory of the Giver, and the benefit of his creatures, as we should

have done in a state of innocence, but to promote our own pleasures or interests."

"We were speaking of satire, papa, and you seemed to think it a dangerous quality."

"I do: one that requires great self-command in the possessor; constant prayer for grace to be enabled to overcome the temptation he will be often exposed to in his intercourse with the world, to use this ready weapon, instead of 'showing all meekness unto all men,' Titus iii. 2, as the Christian is required to do."

"But *can* this quality be used rightly and in the cause of religion?"

"Undoubtedly; we find instances of irony in the Scriptures, and even of sarcasm, which has been defined to be irony in its superlative keenness. Some of these are spoken by the servants of God, and in defence of his cause. Of course you remember Elijah's address to the prophets of Baal, when they had been from morning until noon vainly invoking their false deity, 'Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking; or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked,' 1 Kings xviii. 27. This is considered one of the finest specimens of irony occurring in any language; but, what is more to our present purpose, there can be no doubt that Elijah was here making a legitimate use of his power of satire."

"Can you recollect any other instances in the Scriptures, papa?"

"Yes, one has lately been pointed out by Dr. Faber, in the Song of Deborah, Judges v. There was an ancient and widely-prevalent superstition among the Phœnicians and other eastern nations, that heroes, when dead, became gods, and were translated to the stars: which thus became their vehicles, and from whence they superintended the affairs of mankind. The inspired prophetess is supposed to have alluded to this belief in a fine strain of contemptuous irony in verses 19, 20, which are thus translated: 'The kings came: they fought. Then fought the kings of Canaan, in Taanach, over the waters of Megiddo. But the gain of silver they took not. From the heavens they fought; the stars from their lofty places fought along with Sisera. Yet the river Kishon swept them away.' Thus Deborah exhibits Sisera as believing that the stars in their courses fought on his side; and then infers the vanity of such pagan superstitions from the fact, that the general and his host were wholly discomfited."

"Are there instances of the use of satire or irony in the New Testament, papa?"

"Several, where it is used by the enemies of our blessed Lord in taunts against him and his faithful servants. I need scarcely remind you of the soldiers' speech to the Redeemer; when, having arrayed him in mock majesty, they bowed the knee before him and said, 'Hail, king of the Jews; or of those who derided him while he hung upon the cross, and cried, 'Let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe,' Matt. xxvii. 29, and Mark xv. 32. We wonder at such daring impiety, Alfred; but let us ever remember that the keen retort, the well-turned witicism, which we are ready to regard with such proud self-complacency, though it would wound the feelings of others, spring from precisely the same noxious root. I would also wish you to observe that the pleasure which the satirist derives from his own sallies is just in proportion to the depth of the wound he has inflicted; he would take no pleasure did he not believe that he had wounded, any more than a sportsman would enjoy random shots which left the game untouched."

"You have so well convinced me that satire is a dangerous instrument, papa, that I can no longer envy any one the possession of it; however, as you observed, there is a right use to be made of it."

"Yes; but for this great judgment, and still more, great grace, are required. Perhaps it is for this reason we find the figure of irony, as applied in a good cause, so sparingly used in the New Testament. There is, that I am aware of, only one instance recorded where He whose blessed lips always spoke with 'the meekness of wisdom' is supposed to have employed it, I mean the occasion on which he said to the Jews, 'Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.' In this there seems to have been conveyed an ironical rebuke, as we find him soon after saying, 'I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go,' John vii. 28; viii. 14. In 1 Cor. iv. 8, and a few other places, that eminent servant of the Lord, Paul, uses the same method of reproof; and in later days I have heard of wise teachers who sometimes did the same with good effect. Still I feel as if I could not too earnestly recommend caution in the handling of this sharp weapon. Perhaps Solomon may have intimated the same when he said, 'There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health,' Prov. xii. 19.

E. F. G.

WHO GOES AWAY, AND WHO REMAINS.

It was out of mere curiosity that Christopher entered the chapel whilst the minister was preaching. He had doubtless very often heard mention of that heretical service, and more than once had his priest told him to shun it as he would dangerous seduction. He had never before, however, been so near the place. Business had brought him that day to the town, and he accordingly thought that he might, without any danger, learn for himself what that religion was which was so decidedly opposed to his own. "After all," said he to himself, "what risk do I run? Though the devil himself were speaking there, he could do nothing to me. I have my answer ready, and all his wiles will prove ineffectual in my case." Then commending himself seriously to the protection of his guardian saint, Christopher entered the chapel, and sat down, but very near the door. It was entirely in French, and in a very plain simple manner that the minister was speaking.

His discourse had reached this point: "Has it ever struck you that those disciples of the Lord Jesus, who withdrew from him at Capernaum, did so precisely from the same cause which induced the others to remain? John vi. 66. Do you not accordingly perceive that then, as when Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, the same gospel was 'to the one the savour of death unto death,' but 'to the other the savour of life unto life?' 2 Cor. ii. 16. What, in reality, had the Saviour just declared? In a plain and straightforward manner he had affirmed that the salvation of God is of grace; that is, a free gift of the Father's love in Jesus; and that, accordingly, no one can, by any natural disposition or any personal merit, have a claim on God, so that God ought to give him that salvation by way of recompense for virtues or acts of obedience which he, a sinful creature, may have rendered to him.

"The Saviour declared then plainly that 'God is love;' and that it is in consequence of that very love, and solely in consequence of it, that he gives salvation to a sinner; and this salvation in the Lord Jesus, on whom that love of God has rested, is first the entire pardon of sin, and afterwards the complete possession of heaven. That is, the Lord Jesus affirmed that, as bread nourishes, not because he who eats it imparts vital energy to it; but solely because God has adapted it for man, so in like manner the Saviour, who alone is 'the bread of life,' that 'bread which came down from heaven,' is the sustenance of a soul, not because that soul first brings to him

any life, but, solely and most emphatically, because that bread is of itself life-imparting through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. Whence each of you can easily understand, as said the Saviour in his teaching, that he who eats that bread receives from it into himself the life inherent in it, and which is from heaven, just as he who eats earthly bread receives from it the support of his natural life.

"But this declaration of the Saviour was displeasing to those who claimed to *merit* that heavenly life, that is, their salvation, either by their natural disposition, or by their works and acts of obedience. And so these, who were, nevertheless, outwardly the disciples of Jesus, took offence at this doctrine of grace, which they called 'a hard saying'—an exaggerated, fanatical, and even dangerous doctrine; and then, believing themselves deserving of salvation on account of their own merits, felt no longer inclined to hearken to Him who spoke to them of that salvation only as a free gift of the grace of God. They accordingly from that time 'went back, and walked no more with him;' and one can fancy what they said to each other of the preaching of the Lord Jesus, and how they termed it, perhaps, at last a most dangerous seduction of the devil."

At that expression Christopher started, calling to mind what his priest had said to him so lately, and listened still more attentively to what followed.

"But," continued the minister, "what did the true disciples think of that declaration of the Saviour? You see it in the answer which Simon Peter made in the name of all. Jesus had said to them, 'Will ye also go away?' 'Lord,' said St. Peter, 'to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life;' thus intimating most plainly that that doctrine of the free and sovereign grace of God is alone the truth; and that a soul is saved by the operation of that grace in Jesus alone, and never, nor in any respect whatever, by the efficacy of anything which that soul has done by way of meriting for itself, even in the smallest degree, that salvation from God."

Christopher was all attention. He saw plainly that the Saviour had spoken first of a complete salvation, given freely by the Father in Christ Jesus; and that accordingly the Saviour not only had not said that one ought to win or merit that salvation, but had, in fact, asserted just the contrary. His attention became rivetted; and, like a little child, he listened to the remainder of the sermon, which the minister concluded with this urgent exhortation:—

"Ye then, who desire to see God in heaven, and not to fall into the 'outer darkness,' be ye lowly and simple of heart! Since God, as a munificent prince, lays open before you all his treasures of love, do not you turn away from them, saying that you prefer your own pence and your own farthings; I mean, your virtues and your merits. *Life eternal is the gift of God in Jesus.* Which of you will then say to God, 'I do not want you to give me it; I claim to merit it by my virtues and my acts of obedience?'"

"Oh!" continued the minister with emotion, "if there be here a disciple of the church of Rome, I ask him affectionately which he prefers, whether to receive freely all his salvation from the love of God in Jesus, or to try with dogged resolution to merit for himself heaven by prayers, by alms, or by penances?"

Christopher was deeply moved. "Has he then seen me," he asked himself, "that he speaks thus? But, however that may be," said he on his way home, "one thing is certain, that St. Peter and the other apostles declared that the Saviour had the words of eternal life." And he came to the conclusion that he ought to know these words, and, in order to do so, procure a New Testament and read it. Now Christopher had been engaged in reading it in private about a month, when meeting his priest in a lonely road he walked along with him for some minutes, but with sentiments very different to what he had formerly felt towards him.

"You are thoughtful," said the priest to him, in a kindly manner. "What is preying upon your mind?"

Whereupon Christopher told him candidly all that had occurred at the chapel, and how he had set himself to read the New Testament.

"The New Testament!" exclaimed the priest, "without my permission? But are you not aware, then, that the church does not suffer you to read it without many precautions?"

Christopher assured him that he could not conceive that there was any harm in reading the very words of the Saviour; and added, that he had, in fact, seen nothing but what was good throughout the entire Testament.

"What in particular," demanded the priest, in rather an ironical manner, "do you find better there than what the holy mother church teaches you?"

Christopher felt that he ought at once to open his whole mind. Stopping, therefore, and addressing his pastor in a respectful manner, he spoke as follows:—"Ah, sir, I find in it

that which you have never shown me, even afar off, namely, that salvation, all salvation, has already been wrought out by the Lord Jesus, and that accordingly he alone has 'the words of eternal life.'"

The priest saw instantly that Christopher had escaped him, since he believed in a salvation already perfected by Christ Jesus, and was greatly annoyed. So he made him no direct answer, but said, "You mean to say that you have been bewitched by that heretic! Well, follow him if you like; but rest assured that the eternal curse will hang over a soul which despises the church of God. I am free from your blood!" He then turned his back on Christopher. But he, standing in the very same place, opened his Testament, and there read again that answer of Peter to the Saviour, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life:" and added, worshipping and praising God, "Yes, it is 'by grace,' 'through faith,' 'not of works, lest any man should boast,'" Eph. ii. 8, 9.

To this day the priest continues to say that man ought to merit salvation, and for that purpose submit, in a teachable spirit, to the guidance of the church of Rome. (On the contrary, the minister holds fast to the doctrine that heaven and its blessedness are the free gift of the love of God in Jesus; and Christopher, who has left the priest to attend the minister of the gospel, declares, to whoever is willing to listen, that although even the whole country should forsake Jesus on account of his "hard saying" respecting grace, he would never "go away" from him, since he alone has "the words of eternal life."

C. M.

THE UNHAPPY PROFESSOR.

A SHORT time since I received a letter which deeply affected me. It was from a young man who, having made a profession of religion, had come afterwards to regard himself as an unconverted man. He opened his mind fully to me, and at his request I replied; and as his case probably does not stand alone, I think there may be some utility in publishing the correspondence, sufficiently altered, of course, to keep out of view the actual parties to it.

"Dear Sir,—About two years ago I received my first lasting impressions as to the wisdom of a Christian life, and the necessity of being prepared for eternity. They were produced by a sermon on the danger of delay. I cherished these

impressions, and soon afterwards communicated my state of mind to the leader of a Bible class with which I was connected. I had many interviews with him, and subsequently some with the pastor of the church; and eventually, being frequently urged to decide without delay, I sought admission into the church, and was received into fellowship. But now, in looking back on the decision I then made, I feel certain that I was not a Christian. I know that this is a fearful conclusion to come to; but it is after mature and thoughtful deliberation that I have arrived at it; and you, I doubt not, will admit the justness of the conclusion when you are acquainted with the following facts.

“On the one hand, my conduct was inconsistent. When careless as to my eternal welfare, I had formed an acquaintance with a young woman in a similar condition; but, on becoming solicitous for my soul's salvation, I was strongly urged by the friend to whom I imparted the state of my mind to give up my intimacy with her. This at first I was unwilling to do, but afterwards, as he frequently pressed me on the subject, and assured me I should find such an acquaintance very detrimental to piety, I told him I would consider of it. About this time my parents heard of it, and expressed their entire disapprobation of my forming any connexion of the kind. Being thus placed between love for her, anxiety for my soul's salvation, and the duty of obedience to my parents, I thought I could act so as to imperil neither, by seeing her secretly, and only at distant intervals. My parents and friends considered that I had entirely given up her company, and therefore all appeared to go on well, but, as I did not think they had really any business to interfere with me in the choice of the object of my affections, our meetings became more frequent, though still clandestine. These meetings being often extended beyond the time allowed me of an evening, led me to resort to prevarication when asked what made me so late. I was pursuing this course when I was admitted a member of the church.

“On the other hand, my views at the period of my profession of Christianity were much at variance with its principles as revealed in the Bible. For though I thought (and no doubt truly) that Christianity exhibited a high standard of moral perfection, I had no right views of its spiritual nature. My religion, consequently, consisted in endeavours to effect such an outward reformation of my course of life (which had never been immoral), and to attain to such circumspection in all my open dealings, as might enable me to sustain my new

character, and accord with the manner of the new society I had entered.

“ My first fears as to the reality of my religion were excited about Christmas last. They were occasioned by my observing that those whom I regarded as model Christians seemed to possess a hidden source of happiness which I lacked, and to be actuated by principles which had never influenced me. This troubled me, and I began to seek to unravel the mystery which appeared to hang over them. I had in my possession ‘James’s Anxious Inquirer;’ and now, in search of the spring from whence their pleasures flowed, I began for the first time to read it; a process which considerably enlightened my mind, and made me more dissatisfied than before. When I had finished reading his description of what repentance embodies, I felt that it had never been possessed by me.

“ I was now deeply anxious; but I feared to make known my condition, partly lest I should be branded as a hypocrite, but especially lest I should, by the admission that I had deceived myself, cause sorrow to friends who were dear to me; and who rejoiced at my apparently consistent deportment. Being so influenced, I sought direction in books, but could not perceive the way I should go. I prayed for mercy and grace, but received no answer; and I concluded that the answer came not because I offered prayer in a false character. Somewhere about seven weeks since I commenced again my search after truth, and to aid me in my inquiry purchased Alleine’s *Alarm to the Unconverted*. While reading his description in this work of ‘what conversion is,’ I was fully confirmed in my conclusion that I was not a subject of the new birth; for I feel no love for Christ. The Bible, though not an unread, is to me a mysterious book; I cannot understand it, and cannot discern what there is in it to influence mankind. Prayer, though engaged in by me, is a burden, and only offered because I cannot comfortably go to rest at night, or to work by day, without it. The worship of God is to me an irksome engagement.

“ Yet I desire to be a Christian. For, believing the Bible to be true, I feel there is no other way than by Christ to escape a hell of eternal misery to which I am condemned, and to reach a heaven of endless felicity, to which by grace I may attain; and it is because I would flee from the one, and obtain admittance into the other, that I have opened my heart to you. God knows the truth of what I have stated, and I do hope that he will have mercy upon me. But how am I to obtain

that mercy? How am I to be convinced of sin? How am I to possess true repentance? How am I, in a word, to be a Christian?

“I remain, etc.,

“My dear friend,—I have perused your letter with much interest, and I sincerely sympathise with you in the present painful exercises of your mind. Your case is a deeply important, and, I may add, a truly critical one; and I trust you will give yourself no rest until the question which now agitates you can be satisfactorily determined. At the same time I am glad that you have opened your mind so freely to me, and I pray God that I may be directed to some counsel suited to your case.

“I will not, by a single word, call in question your conclusion, however painful, concerning your spiritual state. I would rather you should reckon yourself positively an unconverted man. We are thus free at once of all controversy respecting the nature of your bygone experience, and the perplexities with which it is invariably attended. Your position is henceforth clearly defined in itself, and distinctly contemplated by the gospel. You are a guilty sinner, under condemnation; a lover of the world, and an enemy to God.

“Let me now extract from your letter a short passage in which you sketch your own further portrait. You say, ‘Yet I desire to be a Christian; for believing the Bible to be true, I feel there is no other way than by Christ to escape a hell of eternal misery, to which I am condemned, and to reach a heaven of endless felicity, to which by grace I may attain. And it is because I would flee from the one, and obtain admittance into the other, that I have opened my heart to you. God knows the truth of what I have stated, and I do hope that he will have mercy upon me. But how am I to obtain that mercy? How am I to be convinced of sin? How am I to possess true repentance? How am I, in truth, to be a Christian?’ So far you write, and this passage will suggest the few remarks I wish to offer.

“In the first place, you claim for yourself an impossible character. You pronounce yourself an unconverted man, and yet say you desire to be a Christian. There is certainly some mistake here. A state of rebellion against God is clearly incompatible with a desire to be a Christian, and in this respect you cannot but deceive yourself. But let us see further what your feelings really are.

"Observe, then, in the second place, that your feelings as here stated afford no evidence of your alleged desire to be a Christian. You wish to escape from hell, and to get to heaven; the latter not for its own sake evidently, but as the only alternative. This is quite compatible with the character of a wicked man, and is resolvable into pure selfishness. Allow me to ask, Have you never seen and felt anything of God's claims upon you, and of your obligations to him? Have you no consciousness of your enmity and rebellion against him, or sense of the duty of reconciliation? Here is a whole world of great facts and truths, my dear friend, concerning which your heart seems to be asleep. Indeed, it is time you should awake to them.

"In the third place, your questions are, for the most part, asked in an attitude of which the gospel takes no notice. I except the first, to which I will give some attention presently. But look at the rest: 'How am I to be convinced of sin? How am I to possess true repentance? How am I to be a Christian?' Now, you never find in the Scriptures any one asking such questions, or any answer to them supplied. I am afraid that reading Alleine's Alarm may, in this respect, have done you mischief. I am afraid, also, that some of the leaven which these questions indicate pervades the other question, 'How am I to obtain the mercy of God?' Let me explain, in a single sentence, that the mercy of God does not need to be obtained; it requires to be accepted. Be wise enough, however, to put all these questions aside, and to express your want in another, which will be found at once accurately fitted to express it, and connected with a divinely authoritative answer. Ask simply, 'What must I do to be saved?' This suits your condition; for sin is on you, both in its condemning and its reigning power, and from both you need to be 'saved.' Now, what you must do is this,—'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' Acts xvi. 31. Here is the great gospel fact set before you, that Jesus Christ has made an all-sufficient expiation for sin, and by his obedience unto death has prepared the way for your acceptance with God. Will you submit to this method of being dealt with? In other words, will you believe in Jesus Christ? If you will, then 'submit to the righteousness of God,' Rom. x. 8—that is, to God's method of making sinners righteous—you will be at once restored to his favour, and receive a place in his family; while your faith will 'work by love,' and 'purify' both your heart and your life, Gal. v. 6, and Acts xv. 9.

"I thus pass by all your questions as, in fact, irrelevant to your case. God's mercy is richly and freely presented to you simply upon condition of your accepting it as it is presented; that is to say, through the sufferings and righteousness of his beloved Son; and the question to which this position of things gives rise is not, Can you? but, Will you? For you 'all things are ready;' and 'the Spirit and the bride say, Come.' When you contemplate the gospel provision in this light, I trust you will be encouraged and constrained to an immediate and grateful acceptance of it; but 'see that you refuse not Him that speaketh,' Heb. xii. 25; for an unutterably awful alternative depends on your decision.

"In thus speaking, and in here leaving you, you must not accuse me of trifling with your feelings. In the fear of God, I have endeavoured to set you in a right attitude for the perception and appreciation of the grace of the gospel; and I conclude with saying, solemnly and affectionately, See that you do not come short of it!

"Very faithfully yours,
"_____"

MOLE-HILLS AND MOUNTAINS.

BY OLD HUMPHREY.

GREGORY GOLD had health, wealth, and friends; but excellent as these things are, they will not, of themselves, make a man happy. The fruit of happiness grows not on such barren boughs. To be perfectly happy we must look onward to another world. Gregory was one of those who seem to see a long way before them, and who prosper in all they undertake. When he bought into the funds, stocks rose; when he purchased land, it was soon after wanted for the railway, and thus became more valuable; and when he speculated in hops, a sudden advance took place, on account of the failure of the hop plantations; hardly was there a fruitful tendril to be seen on the poles. Gregory was, in the language of the world, a "lucky man;" and if thriving in his concerns could with any propriety be called "luck," a "lucky man" he was; but, alas! he lived without God in the world.

Gregory Gold had a fine mansion, with every comfort that he could crowd into it. Had he paid half as much attention to the welfare of his soul as he did to the comfort of his body, it would have been better for him; but how can a man who lives only for the world set his affections on things that are

above? Gregory had fine gardens and an admirable vinery: this vinery was a pet of his, and he boasted of it all the country round. It was a common saying, and much it pleased him to hear it, that the largest bunch of the best grapes that had ever been seen in the neighbourhood grew in the vinery of Gregory Gold.

Man has been likened to a target struck by the arrows of worldly trouble; but a rich man is a broader target than his poorer neighbour on account of the extent of his possessions: no wonder, then, that he is more frequently stricken. Notwithstanding his great prosperity, Gregory Gold had often to endure petty annoyances. His favourite horse fell down and cut his knees; a hail-storm broke the glass panes of his hot-houses; his coachman turned out dishonest; the large mirror in his drawing-room was fractured by a careless servant; his tulip-roots, for which he had paid so high a price, sprang up into common flowers; and what, perhaps, vexed him and mortified him more than all put together, was the humiliating fact that a wealthy neighbour had outdone him in the produce of his vinery, leaving him only "second best" in the estimation of those who had before trumpeted his fame. These things, and many others of the same kind, which ought not to have much moved him, irritated his temper, wounded his pride, and made him suppose that no one was tried so much as he was: the least of his annoyances was magnified into a great affliction.

Gregory! Gregory! does it become a man, blessed with health and so many comforts, to forget the goodness of God, and to give way to pride and anger on account of a few tulip-roots and a few bunches of grapes? For shame! for shame! Open your eyes to your mercies, that you may think less of your little cares.

At no great distance from the mansion of Gregory Gold stood the cottage of Richard Moreton. This cottage, by a sad accident, had been nearly burned down; but Richard, helped by his kind neighbours, had been able to restore it to almost its former state. Gregory Gold would, no doubt, have lent a helping hand; but Richard Moreton was too diffident to ask him, and Gregory Gold was too much occupied with his own concerns to trouble his head with those of his poorer neighbours.

Many a man, unknown to himself, is rendered selfish by his success in the world, and his keen desire to obtain wealth. There are hundreds who, knowing nothing of the trials of those

below them, are deaf and blind to sorrows, which otherwise they would be quick to see and ready to relieve.

Richard Moreton was the very opposite of Gregory Gold, for he had neither health, nor wealth, nor earthly friends of any influence; but he had this great advantage, that from his earliest youth he had been brought up in the fear of the Lord. He not only feared God, but trusted in God; and, grateful for his daily bread, went on, from day to day, magnifying the Lord, and greatly rejoicing in God his Saviour.

What happens to the poor often happens to the rich, and teaches them to feel for others' calamities. The fire at Richard Moreton's cottage hardly occasioned a thought on the part of Gregory Gold; but the fire which broke out in his own mansion had a very different effect upon him. Much damage was done; and a great deal more would have been done, had it not been for the timely aid and resolute conduct of Richard Moreton, who seemed to outdo himself in his exertions: had the house been his own he could not have been more in earnest in his attempts to subdue the flames.

Gregory Gold, when he came to consider, was not a little ashamed to find himself so deeply indebted to one towards whom he had shown no sympathy in the day of calamity; however, all that he now had to do was to make amends for his neglect, and to recompense his poor neighbour for his valuable services.

It was on the sabbath following the fire that Gregory Gold called at the cottage, where he found Richard Moreton reading the Bible to his children. After talking with him about the fire, and thanking him heartily for the kind part he had taken, the conversation went on thus:—

“Your health is not very good, I believe?”

“No, sir, I am not over strong, and yet I should do very well if I could get rid of the rheumatism, which often lays me up for a week together; but God knows what is best for me.”

“And how is your wife? Has she better health than you have?”

“No, sir; for the last two months she has been bedridden. Many a time has she worked hard for me when I have been put by, and now it is my turn. She has been a good wife to me and a good mother to my children, and while I can get a crust she shall share it.”

“I am afraid that your eyes are not very good, for they look rather red.”

“My sight is not good; but, blessed be God, I can see to

read my Bible, for the print is large. What a blessing, sir, is a large-printed Bible! If my eyes were worse than they are, I should not be without comfort, for God's word tells us that 'affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.' Well may we trust God, sir, in natural blindness, when we see that he shows so much tenderness for poor darkened souls. 'I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.'

"And what do you mean to do with your children?"

"I must do the best I can with them and for them, sir. I had by me a trifle of money, that might have come in useful enough some day; but the fire took it all, and now and then I am afraid; but I have no right to be afraid; He who feeds the ravens will feed them. Come what will, sir, they are brought up to fear God, and to look for salvation to Him who died on the cross for sinners."

"Richard Moreton, in spite of your troubles you are a happy man."

"Well, sir, I should rather say that I am contented and thankful than happy, for this is a world of trial, and we must expect, if through mercy we get to a better, to go through 'much tribulation.' God's grace does not prevent a man from bleeding when he is wounded, nor from feeling sorrow when he is afflicted, though it does give him patience to endure his affliction. God has been very merciful to me, and I have much more reason to praise him than to repine."

Gregory Gold listened with wonder. A new train of thought had been opened to his mind, and he became desirous to be alone. He failed not to recompense liberally the services of his poor neighbour, and on his return home was heard to say, "My troubles are very little, and Richard Moreton's are very great; but I see now how it is, while I have been making mountains of mole-hills, my neighbour has been making mole-hills of mountains." This visit to the cottage of Richard Moreton was attended with a holy influence, so that, graciously led to God's holy word, and moved to serious reflection, Gregory Gold became a wiser and a better man.

Is there no other person in the world, think you, reader, beside Gregory Gold, who has run into the error of making mountains of mole-hills? Have you never yourself magnified your troubles, thinking them much greater than they were,

and murmured at your trials, instead of rejoicing for your mercies? How light are our afflictions when contrasted with our transgressions; and how little do we reflect that, in the hands of our heavenly Father, even these "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," may work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!"

We are too apt to think that others have fewer and less afflictions than ourselves; but if we only knew what many endure, we should be ready, with upraised hands and thankful hearts, to render thanks to our heavenly Father for his forbearance and kindness. After all, Richard Moreton might be said to be a richer man than Gregory Gold in his unchanged state, for Gregory had then only provided for time, while Richard was prepared for eternity. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8.

ANECDOTES.

THE PRAYING SOLDIER.

DURING some unhappy commotions in Ireland, many years ago, a private soldier was daily observed to be absent from his quarters, and from the society of his fellow-soldiers. He began to be suspected of withdrawing himself for the purpose of holding intercourse with the rebels, and on this suspicion, probably increased by the malice of his wicked comrades, he was tried by a court-martial, and condemned. The case being brought under the notice of the commander-in-chief, he examined the minutes of the trial; and not being satisfied, he sent for the man to converse with him.

Upon being interrogated, the prisoner solemnly disavowed every treasonable practice or intention, declared his sincere attachment to his sovereign, and his readiness to live and die in his service. He affirmed that the real cause of his frequent absence, when not on duty, was that he might obtain a place of retirement for the purpose of private prayer, for which, the general knew, he had no opportunity among his comrades, who had become his enemies on account of his profession of religion. He said he had made this defence on his trial, but the officers thought it so improbable that they paid no attention to it.

The commander, in order to satisfy himself of the truth of this defence, observed, that if so, he must be able to pray well. The poor man replied, that as to ability he had nothing

to boast of. The general then desired him to kneel down and pray before him; which the man did, and poured forth his soul before God with such copiousness, fluency, and ardour, that on his rising the commander took him by the hand, and said he was satisfied that no man could pray in that manner who did not live in the habit of intercourse with God. He not only revoked the sentence, but received the man into his peculiar favour, placing him among his personal attendants, and in the way to promotion.

No serious mind can be otherwise than interested at this remarkable intervention of Providence on behalf of this man of prayer. Such he was, and thus exhibited a prominent feature of the Christian character. He could not live without prayer, though he thereby exposed himself to the suspicion and hatred of his associates, and even endangered his life; but that God whom, like Daniel, he served, knew how to deliver him in the hour of danger, and not only heard his prayers, but made the exercise of the duty itself the means of his deliverance.

This anecdote also does honour to the general, and to his nation, which can point to commanders warmly attached to the religion of God and his Christ, which so many, alas! treat with indifference and contempt.

THE REFORMED SOLDIER.

A soldier becoming evidently a religious man, met with no little railing, from both his comrades and his officers. He was the servant of one of the latter. At length his master asked him, "Richard, what good has your religion done you?" The soldier made this discreet answer: "Sir, before I was religious, I used to get drunk; now, by God's help, I am sober: I used to neglect your business; now, by the same help, I perform it diligently."

The officer was silenced, and seemed to be satisfied. "For so is the will of God, that with *well-doing* ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," 1 Pet. ii. 15.

TRACT ANECDOTE.

PERSONAL EFFORT.

A VISITOR and tract distributor offered tracts to two carpenters, and while one of them accepted, the other refused, saying that he had no time to read. "Do you not read the Bible?" inquired the visitor. "No," was the reply. "Do you never

pray?" "No, there is no praying at my house." "But, sir, do you not consider that you and your family are dependent upon God? How do you obtain your food and raiment?" "I work for them." "Well, but who gives you health and strength to work for them?" "God, I suppose." "And can you be so ungrateful to one who gives you all you enjoy? Let me entreat you to seek the forgiveness of your sins. Read this tract.. Read the Bible. Wrestle with the Lord in prayer, until you enjoy a sense of his pardoning mercy. Go with your wife and your child to the sanctuary. Ask God for an understanding heart, and live no longer in rebellion against him." Subsequently to this interview two other Christian friends called and conversed with him at the request of the visitor. Soon after this he was found at a social prayer meeting, once and again; then listening to the ministrations of truth; then feeling its power; and now, both he and his wife rejoice in the hope of eternal life, and love to tell what the Lord has done for their souls.

Here was personal effort. No doubt it was accompanied by fervent prayer. And here are the fruits that may be expected from such effort, when made in humble dependence upon the influences of the Holy Spirit.

A. M.

THE SABBATH EVENING.

THE sabbath hours are closing fast,
Improve its moments while they last,
One sabbath blessing more to seize,
Once more the sabbath's Lord to praise.

Praise we the Lord, who died for man,
Who this blest morning rose again,
And now, with all his Father's pow'rs,
Makes heaven's eternal sabbath ours.

Not always thus shall close in night,
The sweetness of our sabbath light;
Soon shall He chase both night and sin,
And glory's endless day begin.

Tho' haply, ere that morning rise
To gladden our faint longing eyes,
Full many a night its course may run,
And many a week-day's work be done:

Yet faith shall soothe us all the while,
'Mid darkest gloom and heaviest toil;
With hope of heaven's high sabbath blest
Our night is day, our labour rest.

A sabbath peace our souls shall cheer,
 If he, the sabbath's Lord, be near;
 And near he still shall be, while thus
 We think on him, and he on us.

With him we rest; our closing eye
 His image fills; his arm is nigh.
 With him we wake, and all is well,
 With him in earth or heaven to dwell.

J. H. C. M.

ABIDE WITH ME.

ABIDE with me! Fast falls the eventide;
 The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
 When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
 Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
 Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
 Change and decay in all around I see;
 O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
 But as thou dwell'st with thy disciples, Lord,
 Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
 Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me!

Come not in terrors as the King of kings,
 But kind and good, with healing in thy wings:
 Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea,
 Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me!

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
 And though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
 Thou hast not left me, oft as I left thee;
 On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need thy presence every passing hour;
 What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
 Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?
 Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
 Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?
 I triumph still if Thou abide with me!

Hold, then, thy cross before my closing eyes;
 Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
 Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
 In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

H. Lyte.



HOME IN VIEW.

WHEN, after a long day's journey towards his home, in winter or summer, the weary traveller arrives at an inn, and finds the comforts and refreshments suited to the season prepared for him, how pleasant he feels, how ready to enjoy, in the one case, the lighted room and blazing fire; or, if in summer, the Venetian blind drawn over the open window, which admits the perfume of shrubs and flowers; and as he either draws the large chair closer to the hearth, or throws himself at full length on a cane seat, he exclaims, How refreshing! how comfortable! and perhaps goes on to admire the contents or the shape of the room, or the view from its windows. Yet if, from any circumstances, the inn were to become his permanent abode, where he was to dwell for the rest of his days, instead of his own home, with what different eyes he would regard all about him. How mean and shabby this or that thing would appear; how uncomfortable and inconvenient something else would seem; how this would need to be altered, and the other altogether done away with! What, however, would be the cause of the difference in the estimation in which the same objects would be held? It would be mainly the difference of position. In the one case the man is a traveller homewards, and his sojourn is for a short time; in the other, there is comparative permanence.

This representation may serve to illustrate the wisdom of the Scripture counsel, to consider ourselves as pilgrims upon earth. If we truly did so, with our confidence and affections set on Christ, how much happier and easier life would be; how much that we toil and fret for now would be deemed not worth an effort! As on a journey we overlook and submit to many inconveniences without a murmur, conscious that it is but for a short time, whilst we doubly prize what tends to lessen fatigue or discomfort, so it would be with the journey of life. If we really felt heaven to be our home, which, after a few toilsome days or years, we were certain to reach, how it would soften every sorrow, lighten every toil, and double every enjoyment. Such, no doubt, has been the experience of many an aged and heavy-laden pilgrim, as it was of an old man in my own village, in whose family the following conversation passed.

The day had been sultry and stormy; torrents of rain had fallen towards evening, and the atmosphere was refreshed, whilst the fields and meadows looked as if inundated, and were heavy to work. George S— was returning to his cottage, tired with his day's labour, wet with the rain, walking slowly, and as if he found his spade almost too weighty to carry. He was in a mood that made all appear gloomy to him. The day's work seemed too much for his strength, and he was comparing it with the slight exertion other men had to make who yet got higher wages. A sort of bitterness was in his mind, that made the life he led seem doubly laborious and difficult to bear. But he soon reached his cottage; and though he entered it in this discontented state of feeling, the scene which presented itself, and the reception he met with, soon chased the cloud from his brow, and restored him to his usual frame of mind. The supper was ready; the smiling and loving countenances of his wife and children showed their pleasure at his return; and his old father, who had risen to let him in, greeted him, saying, "Come, George, sit down and rest after the heavy work you must have had to-day."

"No, no," said little Mary, "father is quite wet; he must change his clothes;" and she caught hold of his frock with both her little hands, to lead him into the other room. His wife, too, begged him to get on dry clothes at once.

In a few minutes George returned in dry shoes and a comfortable warm sort of frock coat, which his wife had made for him to wear on occasions like this, and he took his seat between his father and his wife; and having invoked the

blessing of God on their humble and frugal meal, they all began supper.

After having eaten a few mouthfuls, George said, "I must own I came home just now in very ill humour. I think I never felt more tired; and the thought of having to begin again to-morrow morning discouraged and disheartened me. What a life I had! I thought; drenched with rain, burned by the sun, digging the whole day long in some garden or field bent nearly double, working from morning till evening, day after day, and to gain barely what supports my family—it does seem hard. I felt discontented and unhappy; but since I have been here, how different I feel! I hear the rain beating against the window; but I know the comfort of being under shelter. I have thrown off my wet frock and my muddy shoes. I see your sweet face, Margaret, the joyous looks of my children, and my dear venerable father sits beside me; how could I be dissatisfied? I must have forgotten all this when I gave way to discontent." When I was working to-day, I should have recollected the happy evening before me, and not have repined as I did. Margaret, give me another slice of that bacon; it is most excellent."

The old father smiled. "Rest after labour is sweet," he said. "When you think of the time of returning to your cottage, of the pleasure of meeting us in the evening, of sitting in this comfortable kitchen, which Margaret keeps so nice, or on the bench in the porch, then you feel hearty, you work with good will, and all goes right; but when you let your thoughts dwell on the heat of the sun, or the hardness of your work, or the length of time you must be at it, then you forget the comforts and pleasure these procure you, and you grow sad, and the day seems long and heavy." The old man paused, and leaned back in his chair, gently shaking his head.

"Have you already finished your supper, grandfather?" asked little Mary.

"No, my child," he answered.

"Is anything the matter?" asked her mother.

"My children, I was reminded by what George said of the home and the rest prepared for us in heaven. There we shall have repose, and there will be an end to all the toils of life. Here we suffer; there we shall enjoy. Here we weep; but there all tears shall be wiped away. Here we have perishing bodies, subject to sickness and death; there at least we shall be clothed with glorious and immortal bodies. We have momentary joys and pleasures here; but there they shall never

end. Here we are assailed by temptations and defiled by sin; there they shall never enter; we shall be sheltered from temptation, and shall sin no more against our Father and our God. Here feeble faith can with difficulty realize the things that are invisible; but there faith shall be changed to sight. Here self-love soils our best moments, those in which we most love our God; but there the love of God will be perfected, for we shall see him as he is. Here are separations and partings; but there we shall be ever with each other and with the Lord. Here there are sighs and lamentation; but there joy and songs of triumph. O my children, it is well to consider these things, to think of our eternal home, to consider the two divisions of our existence, the journey of life and the heavenly home. As long as our minds are firmly fixed on that home, the way seems less painful, and the road less fatiguing. Our cares are lightened by thinking of 'the rest that remaineth to the people of God.' My son, when you feel your spirit sink, recall to mind these words, 'The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.' Our light affliction is but for a moment; the happiness of our heavenly home is eternal."

All were solemnized by the old man's words, but all felt happier for the thoughts suggested; and when supper was ended, George took his hymn-book, and reading the following hymn to his children, marked it for them to learn by the following Sunday:—

As when the weary trav'ler gains
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His heart revives if 'cross the plains
He sees his home, though distant still.

While he surveys the much-loved spot,
He slights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen.

Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

Jesus, on thee our hope depends,
To lead us on to thine abode;
Assured our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road.

E. M. P.

LUTHER AND THE COUNT EBERHARD VON ERBACH.

FROM THE GERMAN.

IN the year 1518, on the evening of the 8th of April, Count Eberhard might be seen striking his spurs into the sides of his black charger, as he galloped over the bridge of his castle at Erbach, so fast that his followers could hardly keep up with him. It had cost him a hard struggle to leave home at this time, for in one of the chambers his little daughter Hildegard was lying, to all appearance, at the point of death. The countess had flung her arms round her husband, and strove to detain him, as if she thought that the angel of death would not seize his prey in the presence of her valiant lord. But it was all to no purpose; his determination was fixed; he tore himself away, though a severe pang pierced his heart as he bade his wife farewell, and cast a last look on his child's pale form. Yet, mingled with his anguish, a watchful observer might have noticed something like a wild joy gleaming in his eyes, when at the head of his retainers he entered at full gallop the little town in the vicinity, which was already lighted up, while the evening chimes were sounding. As he cleared the castle-gate, John Speckel, the priest of Michelstadt, who was staying in attendance on the sick child, shouted after him, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully;" and added, "Whoso loveth father or mother, son or daughter, more than me, is not worthy of me!" but the loud and earnest tones of the monk's voice were lost in the clatter of the horses' feet.

People who lived in the neighbourhood were puzzled to imagine what this hurried departure of the count, at such a time, might mean. They knew him to be of a passionate, fiery temper, that could ill brook contradiction, but withal of a tender, sympathetic heart. Some thought that he was in haste to fetch the famous physician just settled at Amorbach, and that he had taken so large a retinue with him because the road over the Eulbacher heights was reckoned dangerous; others asserted that he was going to chastise the inhabitants of Sickengen, who had decoyed and captured his son and his tutor, who had been living at Strasburg, for they had seen Rüd't of Collenberg, a menial, whom he had employed as a spy, enter the castle gates not long before the count took his departure. But they were all at fault. It was something quite different that had checked the tender feelings with which

he sat at his daughter's bedside, and had filled his breast with emotions of another kind.

In the autumn of the preceding year God had caused the long-forgotten word of his grace in his Son Christ Jesus to be once more proclaimed at Wittenberg by his servant Martin Luther, and within a fortnight it had spread through almost all parts of Germany, and found an entrance into many hearts. But, as always happens under such circumstances, it was attended with gainsaying and misunderstandings. While it met with acceptance among the common people, and even with many of the higher classes, who, amidst their outward splendour, had hearts alive to their spiritual wants; yet among the great and wise of this world there were those who attempted to "kick against the pricks." To this latter class belonged Count Eberhard von Erbach. He threatened apostates from the Romish church with the severest punishments, and roused the clergy of all ranks and orders to oppose the progress of heresy. John Speckel, whose name we have already mentioned, a man of learning and irreproachable character, earnestly seconded his efforts; but all attempts to shut out the new doctrine from the count's domains were as powerless as if he had tried to stay the blasts that rushed through the valleys of the Odenwald.

The count and his ecclesiastical fellow-worker were delighted when Eckius, Prierias, and others took the field against Luther; but persons who were more far-sighted, and had read their writings, and better understood the signs of the times, were disposed to believe that his cause would only be advanced by such opponents. Under all these attacks Luther's own courage and faith waxed stronger; and this very year, on the 26th of April, when a meeting of the Augustin friars was to be held at Heidelberg, the undaunted reformer, having provided himself with letters of introduction to the Prince Palatine, set out on foot, though many who were anxious for his safety strongly dissuaded him from the journey.

Luther's progress from town to town resembled a triumphal procession; the poor, suffering people everywhere received him as a man who sympathized with their unhappy lot; and even many, who had been hitherto undecided, or positively hostile, were won over to his cause, when they heard him preach in the streets or highways so powerfully and yet so humbly, giving all glory to the Lord. From Wurzburg, where he met with a very friendly reception from Bishop von Bibra, he came down to Wertheim, intending to proceed to

Heidelberg by way of Miltenberg. From every quarter people flocked to Miltenberg to see the man whose name had found its way into the most distant peasant's cottage; and that town, which had declared entirely in his favour, was prepared to give him a most cordial welcome.

Excepting the abbot of Amorbach and the Benedictine monks of Michelstadt, no one was more indignant at Luther's popularity than Count Eberhard. Every report of the approach of the detested reformer, and of the general feeling in his favour, was like one of Job's messengers; and he was ready to gnash his teeth when told of the festive preparations of the Miltenbergers. From the moment he heard of them no one could get a pleasant word from him excepting his little daughter, whose dangerous state only served to deepen the gloom that overcast him. At last his resolution was taken. The priest had thrown out hints, how one bold, determined man might put an end to the confusion into which this so-called reformer had thrown a whole nation. By degrees he let out his meaning in plainer terms; he represented to the count that he had already resorted to physical force in order to ward off temporal evil from his subjects; and, therefore, he might surely gird on his armour for the glory of God, and the spiritual welfare not only of his own vassals, but of the whole German nation. He would find it no difficult matter to attack the reformer unawares, as he travelled without an armed retinue, and might give him in custody to the monks of Michelstadt or Heimbach till he consented to recant, or his name and doctrine were forgotten. The count lent a ready ear to this advice: he had often longed to encounter heresy with lance and sword; and like his ancestor, after hearing Pope Urban at Clermont, he exclaimed, when the priest had finished, "God grant it! God grant it!" as if he were setting out on a crusade.

Having dispatched a messenger to bring him word when the reformer would set out from Miltenberg, and what road he would take, whether under Maine, by Aschaffenberg, or by Amorbach, through the Odenwald, he made arrangements to meet either case. If Luther went by Maine, then the count's vassals, Echter of Mespelbrunn, Bernhold of Eschan, and the bailiff of Wildenstein, with six trusty servants, were to fall upon him, and convey him with the utmost secrecy to Erbach; but if he proceeded through the Odenwald, then the count himself would conduct the enterprise. After two days his scout returned and brought word that Luther was to

set out the next day, but nothing certain was known respecting his route. But to make sure of his prey in either case, the count, as we have seen, notwithstanding his daughter was at the point of death, sallied forth in the evening, and took the road to Miltenberg. It was already twilight when he crossed the heights of Eulbacher, and the pine-wood torches were lighted in the adjoining hamlets; but the count hurried on so fast in front of his retinue, that when the clock struck eight, they had reached the mill on the Mudan, where, according to agreement, a messenger from the bailiff was waiting for the count, with the news that his orders had been punctually obeyed, and that the armed men were lying in ambuscade.

Von Erbach felt satisfied, and passed through the gate which the magistrates of Miltenberg had adorned and illuminated with the following inscription in large letters:—

“Gottes Wort und Luthers lehr’
Dampft des Satan nimmermehr.”

i. e.,

“God’s word and Luther’s lore
Quench shall Satan nevermore.”

The whole town was alive. Groups of men were moving about the streets, and talking of the wonderful man to whose powerful preaching they had been listening that day. The count dashed through the excited croud straight to the inn near which Luther had taken up his quarters. “Heyday! my lord count!” exclaimed Nicol Uhrig, the innkeeper, with many a profound bow; “I should never have dreamt that Luther would have made your grace stir from home!” The count made no reply, but, as if in a churlish mood, withdrew at once to his bed-chamber.

Wearied out by his hasty ride and mental agitation, he threw himself on his bed, and dropped into a deep sleep. After some hours he awoke, and, as he wished to keep awake, rose up and went to the window.

The stillness of night has a wonderful influence on almost every one whose heart is not thoroughly hardened. When every being that lives and moves on earth, from man in his chamber to the bird in its nest, is asleep and silent, one seems to hear the breath of Him who keeps guard and watches over all. Earth seems like a land in which rebellion has been put down and its voice silenced, and gives us a foretaste of the time in which the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. Perhaps the count

felt something of this kind, for the wrathful emotions of his heart were stilled, and the wild fire quenched that raged only the evening before. Darkness and silence were spread over the little town with its slumbering population; only here and there a star twinkled in the sky, and the light glimmered in the warder's tower; the stream of the Maine might be heard as it rushed along; and when the bell of the nearest convent tolled for matins, the count was quite at a loss what course to take. His yesterday's ride, and the design which had occupied him, seemed to have passed away like a dream; his thoughts first travelled homeward to his sick child and anxious wife; then they rose upwards to the heavenly Father, the "sole arbiter of life and death," and ended in a heartfelt, earnest prayer with which he placed his cares in God's hands.

All of a sudden a light shone in the corner chamber of the next house, and a deep, fine, manly voice, which, in the silence of the night, fell on his ears quite audibly, uttered the words, "This may God grant, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen!" As the count occupied the highest story, he overlooked the chamber, and, though the curtain was let down, he could plainly discern the dark form of some one kneeling down in prayer. For a while this person seemed to be turning over the leaves of a book, and then began his prayer again: "O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust; save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me: lest they tear my soul like a lion, while there is none to deliver." These words were taken from the seventh Psalm. The count had never before heard any one pray in this manner; each word in the lips of the worshipper seemed like a sledge-hammer, knocking at heaven's gate, especially the concluding verses, "My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous, and is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors. Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head." These words were uttered with such power and confidence, that the count could not help thinking, "Truly this man has a better shield than I have, and a sharper sword. With such a man I would not wish to be otherwise than on good terms." And when the person went on to pray for all Christendom, that

God would cause the clear light of his gospel to shine forth ; that he would turn the hearts of princes as the rivers of water are turned, and make the poor common people free by his truth ; and that, as to the enemies of the word, he would crush their pride ; and that ignorant persecutors might take warning by his judgments, and attend to the one thing needful ; at the close of these petitions the count could not help clasping his hands with tears in his eyes, and exclaiming aloud, " Amen ! amen ! Grant it may be, O God, as thy servant has said ! "

The count walked up and down his chamber restlessly, occupied with the single thought of seeing the man face to face whom he had heard praying in this manner. At last he noticed that the day had begun, and the sun was shining in at his window. He rang for the innkeeper, who immediately made his appearance with a tankard of warm ale on a silver waiter, which he was going to place on the marble table. But the count stopped him, saying, " Cannot you tell me who that person is in yonder chamber with the curtain let down ? " " Can I tell you ? " replied the innkeeper. " Certainly. And have you really seen him ? Why it is Luther, the arch-heretic. His lamp has been burning for some hours. "

The count stood thunderstruck. " Luther, is it ? "

" Yes ; Dr. Martin Luther, " said the innkeeper, seeing his astonishment. " Has your grace any commands to give ? " but receiving no answer, he made his bow and withdrew.

For some time the count stood as if fixed to the spot. At last, without touching his breakfast, he hurried down stairs, went over to the next house, and stood in an instant before Luther. On the count's entering Luther rose from his seat, and beheld a portly figure, in complete armour, with his sword by his side, standing before him with an anxious look, but not uttering a word. But when at last, in a kindly tone, Luther broke the silence by asking what he wanted, the count fell on his knees, and exclaimed, " O man, you are better than I am. God forgive me that I ever thought of doing you harm ! " He then told what was his design in coming thither ; and how he heard him pray, and how his words overpowered him.

" Not my word, " said Luther, " but the word of the Lord, which I, a poor unworthy sinner, have the honour of bringing into Germany. Go your way in peace, my lord count ; he who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ. If it please God, you shall see still greater

wonders, for 'he breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder.' His word they cannot destroy, for the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

The count's attendants were waiting at the entrance of the inn, where they had been joined by Echter and Bernhold, expecting to receive his orders. But he galloped past them, taking the road homewards, and waving his hand, said, as if lost in thought, "Go in peace; the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

As he entered the gateway of the castle his wife came out to meet him, and clasped him joyfully in her arms. Their child had passed a good night in a long, sound sleep, and was sitting up in her little bed, playing and waiting for her father.

Without going into particulars, we may state that from that time the count zealously endeavoured that the word which he had persecuted might be published with all fidelity to his subjects. Among the princes who were present at the Diet of Worms is to be found the name of Count Eberhard von Erbach, as an enlightened friend of the Protestant cause, who there made a good confession on its behalf.

John Speckel also, formerly priest at Michelstadt, was the first of a succession of ministers who published the gospel at Brensbach; and on his pulpit, which was erected by Count Eberhard in the year 1526, is to be seen an inscription, which was then the watchword of Protestantism, "*VERBUM DOMINI MANET IN AETERNUM!*" "The word of the Lord endureth for ever."

JAMES RILY'S STORY.

WITH a slow step and a sad heart, James Rily returned home after a walk of many miles, which he had taken for the purpose of trying to procure employment as a gardener, to which trade he had been brought up; but work of any kind was hard to be obtained, since it had pleased God to visit Ireland, his native country, with famine and its attendant miseries, and Rily had not succeeded in his undertaking. When he drew near to his little cottage, he stopped, and stood for some time looking at it. Even to a less partial spectator it would have been a pleasing object, particularly in a country where the people are in general too poor to pay much attention to the appearance of their dwellings.

It was a fine evening in summer, and the slanting beams of

the sun shone brightly upon the spot. A rustic porch, which Rily had made before his door, was covered with a honeysuckle in full blossom, and the wall of the cottage was over-spread with roses, while mignonette, lupin, and sweet-pea adorned the little garden in front, altogether filling the fresh breeze with their fragrance. Even the hedge which enclosed his field at one side of the house displayed the skill of the owner, being neatly trimmed, and at the top cut into grotesque figures of cows, sheep, and dogs.

Rily thought that his cottage had never looked so pretty. "And I must leave it," said he, "leave it for ever; my home, and my father's home—my native country; but, oh, what would all that signify? My wife, my dear wife, my childr—must I leave you too?" Tears trickled down his sunburnt cheeks; but he brushed them off, and continued: "Is this the way I bear the will of God?—of him who so graciously says to his people, 'Be strong and of a good courage; fear not, nor be afraid: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee: he will no fail thee, nor forsake thee,' " Deut. xxxi. 6.

Calm in the confidence produced by the remembrance of this gracious promise, Rily entered his cottage. "Welcome, James, welcome," said his wife. "Have you good news? Well, don't mind telling now," she added, after reading an answer to her question by a glance at his countenance. "Sit down, dear, and take this after your long walk," laying some frugal fare before him.

Having partaken of it, "Mary," said he, "and you, my children, tell me, when we repeat the Lord's Prayer together, what do we mean by saying, 'Thy will be done?'"

"That God's will is best, and that we are satisfied with it, father," replied the eldest boy.

"And shall we tell truth to God when we say so?"

"Oh, father, to be sure."

"Remember, my boy, that we cannot submit entirely to God's will, nor do anything that is right, in our own strength; but God is ready to help us. What did you learn from the eleventh chapter of Luke last Sunday, Johnny?"

"That our heavenly Father gives his Holy Spirit to them that ask him," replied the boy.

"Well, let us always ask for grace to help in time of need," said the father.

The mother burst into tears. "Oh, James, I know what this means. Must we, must we do as you said?"

"If it be God's will, Mary; and so it seems to be, for I see nothing else that we can do." A long silence ensued. Rily then resumed, speaking in a hurried way to hide his agitation. "No work was to be had where I went to-day, though I offered to go for the hire of a common labourer if they promised constant employment. This was my last hope; so now I—I will go to America. A ship sails this week. My brother is getting on well there, and will help me; and, with the blessing of our God, I shall soon be able to send money to bring you all to me. Meanwhile, my dear wife, my poor children, you—"

He stopped. Mary wiped away her tears, cleared her choking voice, and said, "We, James, will live with my relations as long as they can keep us, or we can go into the poor-house. Cannot you leave us in God's care, for go you must? I see it plainly now. Oh, oh!" and again her grief could not be suppressed. The children also wept, partly because they saw their mother's distress, being too young to understand all that was said.

Rily walked to the cottage door, and looked out for a while. "Wife," he then said, "it must be done at once. We must sell all our little possessions to pay my passage. Farmer Brown's son, who is going to be married, and to take this cottage when we leave it, will buy our furniture; and I will take the donkey to morrow to sell him to a man who wants one."

"Sell the donkey! sell Neddy!" exclaimed all the little ones, who now heard what they could perfectly comprehend. "Part Neddy! oh, sure you won't, father?" Weeping and lamentation followed, to end which Mrs. Rily took off the little mourners, and put them to bed. On returning she found her husband seated under the woodbine of the porch, and placed herself beside him. It was now nearly dark, and everything was silent.

"I was thinking, Mary," he said, "that the ways of God seem strange. Some who have large estates and grand castles cannot be satisfied, but want more riches or more honours; so that we cannot wonder when we see all taken from them, as we often do in these times. But I was happy, and could be happy all my life, with you and our children, in this little cabin; to work the whole day for our support, and then in the evening to keep this spot in order; or sometimes gather the wild flowers, and find out what they are from my book of botany, though my Mary would often scold, and say she did not know what good that was."

"Oh, James dear, I was only joking. It was good, I know,

for you delighted in it; and it taught you to know more of God by seeing the wonderful things he has made; and the more you learned about him the better you loved him; and that filled your heart with love to me and to every one about you, and made you so good and so kind."

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love," (1 John iv. 8,) said Rily; "and, Mary, shall we not trust ourselves to the care of him who, as our dear Saviour said, doth so clothe the grass of the field? Oh, may he forgive me. I was wondering, and I fear I was vexed too, to think he was going to take from me what I was so contented and so happy with, because I could not see the reason why he was doing it. I forgot that he said to his disciples, 'What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter,' John xiii. 7. Can we doubt His love who 'sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins?' 1 John iv. 10. Let us never doubt it, whatever may happen, Mary; but always be comforted in knowing that he maketh 'all things work together for good to them that love him,' though we cannot at present tell how."

"I'll try, James, I'll try; but it is hard to be parted."

"The hardest thing of all, Mary."

"Well, James, may be we could stay together yet. I had a visitor while you were away to-day."

"Who was that?"

"Father Edmund, the priest. Listen, James, till I tell you what he said, for he was civil and quiet to-day. 'Mrs. Rily,' says he, 'I find that your husband is fixed in his bad ways; and that, although you are all in such distress, and I offered to get him a right good situation as gardener with a friend of mine if he would go back to the religion of his fathers, he would not hear of it. I don't blame you so much, because you were brought up to be a Protestant, Mrs. Rily: and now I am come with a message from my friend, Mr. Flynn, who has retired from business, and taken a fine place in the country. He desires me to say that he will take James on very good terms, without requiring him to turn again to mass, and only on one condition, which is, that you send the children regularly to my school, where they will get the best of instruction.' Think of this offer, James. What harm would it do the children to learn reading and writing in his school? and you could teach them the Bible yourself in the evenings, and we would all be together, and have our home, and—oh, James, James! don't leave us, whatever we do." She flung her arms round his neck, weeping bitterly.

Poor Rily was greatly moved. "True, Mary, we might watch the children closely. The offer is fair enough. At least it seems so," he continued after a pause.

"And you will accept it," she cried.

"Father Edmund is a deep man, wife: this is his last effort, all others having failed, to lead me back to the errors I have left. We might, indeed, avoid the danger, being aware of it; we might. Oh! 'tis a strong temptation. The Lord direct us what to do."

"Amen!" responded Mary. "And I do think we shall not be obliged to part. I feel faith in God."

"Faith, my dear Mary, is reliance upon what God has promised. Now he has nowhere promised that we shall not be obliged to part; but, praise be to him, he has promised to give us strength according to our day. Let us try to find out by his word what is right for us to do in this matter. It is a great temptation, Mary; but 'we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,'" Heb. iv. 16.

With a sincere desire to do right, Rily searched the word which God has given to be a light unto the path of his people for direction. It said to him, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;" it commanded him to train up his children in the way they should go, Matt. xxvi. 41; Prov. xxii. 6; but he found nothing to encourage him in accepting the priest's offer. It was true he might, in a strange land, meet worse trials of faith, and that by leaving his children they might lack instruction; but while simply doing what he believed to be God's will, he could expect help from above, and he could depend upon that gracious promise, "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive."

The sad preparations for a break-up of the peaceful little establishment in Rily's cabin commenced the following morning. Mary began to arrange her furniture for the expected purchaser; and James was to go and sell the donkey. Poor Neddy was a great pet, having been reared by them; and great was the children's grief when they saw him about to depart. They stroked his head, and clung round his rough neck, sobbing as if their hearts would break. The eldest, Johnny, begged to be allowed to accompany his father, and so have a last ride upon Neddy. They set off at last, the

morning being bright and fine, but had not proceeded far when the sky grew dark, and drops of rain began to fall. "This is like my own day," thought Rily. "The beginning was fair; but how suddenly all has changed to gloom. Well, my favourite hymn says,—

"Ye feeble hearts, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
In blessings o'er your head."

The rain increased now; and as no house was near, they took shelter under the thick foliage of a large sycamore tree. They were not long there when a young lady, accompanied by an elderly gentleman, approached at a quick pace, and also took shelter under the tree, Rily insisting on their taking his place where no rain could reach them, while he, his boy, and Neddy stood near.

"This rain is unlucky, papa," said the lady. "Our botanical researches must be put off for a better opportunity; but we have already found two or three specimens of flowers not in your collection."

"Yes; and as we are now residents in this country, I expect to find many more."

"Ay, papa, if we could but discover where that curious fern is to be found which is peculiar to this country, what an addition it would be to your museum."

"Indeed it would: it is described as very beautiful, having a habit very different from the rest of our ferns, and belonging to a group which abounds in the tropics; but it is so rare that I have little hope of ever finding it."

Rily advanced a step, touched his hat respectfully, and said, "I beg pardon, sir; but I think you mean the *trichomanes brevisetum*, and I know where it is to be had."

The strangers seemed surprised, and greatly delighted at the prospect of procuring what they had long and earnestly desired. After talking for some time about this fern, and other indigenous plants, "Is a knowledge of botany common in this country?" said the gentleman.

"No, sir; but in learning my business as a gardener I got such a liking for it, that I studied it since whenever I could."

"This man would be a treasure to us, Clara," whispered the gentleman to his daughter. "Are you in employment at present?" said he to Rily.

The question led to a conversation, which put the stranger in possession of James's little history. Meanwhile the child,

who stood stroking Neddy's head, and often kissing it, had attracted the lady's attention, till, in answer to her inquiry, he told her, with a fresh burst of grief, that the favourite was going to be sold. Her kind feelings were now excited; and, by looks and whispers, she warmly encouraged a wish which she perceived had arisen in her father's mind to engage the gardener, and save him and his family the misery of separation.

"Where have you lived hitherto?" the gentleman inquired.

"I was gardener at Glencourt yonder, sir, till it was sold, and the old family left it."

"Have you testimonials from them?"

"Indeed I have, sir," taking a paper from his pocket, and presenting it.

"Most satisfactory indeed," said the gentleman, on looking over it.

"The new owner of Glencourt is come there; would you not like to engage with him?"

"It was my last hope, sir, but it was in vain. I went there yesterday, and saw the steward. He asked my name; and as soon as he heard it, he said I would not answer, refusing me employment even as a common labourer."

"Ha! I can explain it all," cried the stranger. "I am the owner of Glencourt, and desired my steward to look out for a gardener. He told me yesterday that one had applied, whose services he had declined for this reason. Some days ago he accidentally met a gentleman walking about the park, who got into conversation with him, and inquired about the persons he was employing. 'As you are a stranger, and I know this country,' said the man, 'I would just give you a friendly hint against engaging a gardener named Rily.' On this hint my steward acted. I am now convinced that your enemy was the wily priest. This may be called persecution, I trust for righteousness' sake. We also love the Bible; and are humble followers of that Saviour in whom neither you nor any one else ever trusted in vain. Consider yourself engaged as my gardener, Rily. You will find the terms advantageous; while I rejoice to have a Christian and also a botanist in my service."

The rain was all over, and everything bright again, when Mrs. Rily, who sat lonely and sorrowful in her cottage, was called forth by the voices of the children, crying, "Run, mother; here is Johnny trotting Neddy across the field, shouting out, 'Good news!' and father walking quickly, and looking so happy." But who could describe the scene which followed

when that good news was told? It is scarcely necessary to add that, in the midst of all their joy, the gardener and his family did not fail to express, and also to feel, deep gratitude to Him who had caused it, and from the heart to acknowledge that—

"It is the Lord whose wondrous skill
Can from afflictions raise
Blessings, eternity to fill
With ever-growing praise."

E. F. G

ANNA LOUDON ; OR, "WHAT WILL SATISFY?"

ANNA LOUDON had just parted with some young companions who had been spending her birth-day with her. It had been a day of great enjoyment; and kind friends had loaded Anna with many welcome gifts; among which, to her great delight, was one which she had longed to possess, but hardly ventured to hope for—a neat, rosewood writing-desk, well furnished with stores of everything that she could require in using it. Yet, now that the evening was come, and her companions gone, and Anna was left with her treasures, she seemed far from being perfectly content. She wandered listlessly about the room, as if at a loss what to do; lifted and looked at one or another of her presents, and laid it down again with an unsatisfied kind of look; and, at last, drawing a stool to the fire-side where her elder sister sat reading,—“Mary,” said she, sadly, “I wonder why I am not happy to-night.”

Mary was touched at the disappointed tone in which these words were spoken. She laid down her book, and drew her little sister kindly towards her. “I am very sorry, dear Anna,” she replied, “to hear that you are not happy. I thought when you got a writing-desk of your own you expected to have nothing more to wish for.”

“So I did,” said Anna, “but now that it is there, I feel as if I wanted something more.”

“And what is it that you want?”

“I do not know,” said Anna, “but I do not feel satisfied with all these things;” and as she spoke, tears of disappointment fell from her eyes.

“I think I know what it is you want,” said Mary; “do you remember that beautiful story of the Prodigal Son, that you have read so often?”

“Yes,” replied Anna, wondering what the Prodigal Son could have to do with her.

"And do you remember what he tried to feed himself with when he was hungry?"

"The husks that the swine did eat."

"And did they satisfy his hunger?"

"No."

"What would have done so?"

"Bread, I suppose."

"And where was there bread enough and to spare?"

"In his father's house."

"And might he have had as much of that bread as he chose?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Well, dear Anna, do not you think that you have perhaps been doing just like the prodigal? All your pretty presents, and your play, and your companions, are good things that God has kindly given you to enjoy, but he never meant these things to satisfy you. If you try to make yourself happy with only these, you will find that they are just like the husks. It is only bread that will satisfy you, my little Anna—the bread that the Father gives. Pray to God to make you know Jesus Christ, who is the bread of life, and to give you him into your heart; and then you will never feel as if you wanted something more. You will be so happy that you will feel you have enough, even though all the other things should be taken away from you."

Anna heard in silence. She had no desire to try this way of being happy. Like many other little girls, she was accustomed to read her Bible and to pray in her own way every day; but she did this as a duty, and because she had been taught to do so; not because she had any pleasure in it. She needed that the Holy Spirit should open her eyes to see the beauty of the Lord Jesus and her own need of him, as a poor sinful child, before she could see anything in him to attract or satisfy her. So she went on still trying to be happy in her own way, and often thinking for a little while, when she got her wishes gratified, that now she wanted nothing more. But she always found after a time that it was with other things just as it had been with the birth-day and the writing-desk: they were all like the husks, or, as they are called in the word of God, "broken cisterns that hold no water."

When Anna had passed two more birthdays, she was sent to school at a distance from home; and her whole attention was soon engrossed with her new occupations. She became a favourite with many of her companions; and in the enjoyment

of their society, and the interest of her studies, the year, on the whole, passed pleasantly ; though, in the midst of all, her old birth-day feeling often rose to her mind, "I feel as if I wanted something more." As the end of the school-term or session drew near, and with it the prospect of prizes, her exertions were redoubled. "I really think, Anna," said one of her young friends, "you intend to carry off all the prizes."

"Oh, no," said Anna, smiling, "I will leave you a few. I have set my heart on three: the French, history, and composition ; and if I get these I shall be quite content."

Again Anna obtained her desire. The day of distribution arrived, and the three prizes were her own. Very happy indeed she felt in returning home after her long absence, and displaying to her father and sister the fruits of her industry. But when her diligence had been praised and the prizes admired again and again, her pleasure in them was over.

"Now," said Anna to her sister, a few days after her return home, "I am going to enjoy myself. I am almost my own mistress, and I can arrange my time just as I please. I shall study the things that I like, and practise my music, and work, and walk with you, and the days will pass quite delightfully."

Mary smiled, but she sighed at the same time. She saw that Anna was still trying to drink out of "broken cisterns," and she knew that disappointment must be the result.

Anna's studies went on very well for a few weeks ; then she became not quite so regular. A very small thing would serve as an excuse to set aside one or another of them almost every day, until at length her books were allowed to lie almost untouched on the shelves.

"Have you quite given up your studies, Anna?" said Mary, one wet morning, as Anna sat at the window, gazing idly out at the rain, while her work lay on her lap.

"No," said Anna, "I did not mean to give them up, but it is very dull studying here ; quite different from what it was at school. I do not mean that I care for prizes or things of that kind, but it is very uninteresting to study without an object."

"But why should your study be without an object," said Mary, "though you have no prizes to work for or praise of teachers to gain? Could you have a greater object in improving your mind than to make yourself able to understand more of God, and more fit to serve him? Oh, dear Anna, if you would but give yourself to Jesus, you would no longer be

at a loss for a motive of sufficient interest. His love would constrain you to use every power to the utmost for his sake."

But again Anna turned coldly away. Her poor blind heart saw as yet in the Lord Jesus no beauty that she should desire him.

When Anna had been some time at home, she and her sister were invited by a lady, a kind friend of their father's, to join her family party in a tour which they were about to make on the continent. Mary could not leave her father; but Anna, with his consent, joyfully accepted the invitation. The first three or four of her letters were written in the highest spirits; describing, with many expressions of delight and interest, the beautiful scenes through which she passed, and the habits and manners of the people, which were often new and strange to her. "The only drawback to my enjoyment," she wrote, "is the thought that it must soon be over."

By-and-by, however, such passages as these began to occur in her letters: "How long it seems since I left you and papa;"—"I think it is possible to see too much even of the most lovely scenery;"—and, at last, "I am quite weary of this continual sight-seeing and removing from place to place, and I long to be at home and quiet." And at the end of three months Anna returned once more to her village home, with far more joy than even that with which she had left it. Perhaps she was the more glad to find herself there, because, during the last few weeks of her absence, her health, never very strong, had been suffering from the excitement and fatigue of her long tour, and from exposure to the chill evening air; for it was now drawing towards autumn. This had made her long the more earnestly for her father and her gentle sister, who, almost from Anna's infancy, had been to her as a mother. Mary received her beloved sister with all but a mother's tenderness, and set herself to use all the means that love could devise to restore her strength and cheerfulness. But even her own home and her father's watchful anxiety and her sister's loving care had not the effect upon Anna that had been hoped for. Her illness became only more decided; and though all was done that medical skill could suggest, she became rapidly weaker and worse. Her father and sister felt very anxious about her, and Anna's own fears were awakened. Mary had often, since her return, sought to draw her mind to serious thought as to her state of heart before God; but so long as Anna saw nothing alarming in her illness, she showed as little interest in such subjects as she had done when in health. Her Bible

was still read daily ; and she took pleasure in reading or in listening while her sister read the good books with which her little table was always well furnished ; but all personal conversation she avoided. But now that the idea of danger, and perhaps death, had entered her mind, she could no longer be indifferent.

" Papa," said she, one evening while her father sat by her bedside gazing sadly on her altered face, " Papa, what does Dr. H— think about me ? Does he think—" and Anna paused.

" Dr. H— has not been here to-day you know, my child," said her father.

" No, but you know what he thinks. You know," she added, while tears rose to her eyes, " whether he thinks I am likely to get well again."

" Dear Anna," said her father, soothingly, " he has not given any decided opinion. He thinks you very ill, but we hope that God may yet bless the means we are using, and restore you to health."

" Papa," said Anna, " I must know, I ought not to be deceived ; will you promise me this ? will you ask Dr. H—, when he comes to-morrow, to give you his decided opinion, and tell me truly what he says ?"

" I will, dear child, I will ; for I have no wish that you should be deceived. But oh, dear Anna, that you would be concerned now to seek peace with God, through the blood of Jesus, whatever the result of your illness may be. Without him, were you even in perfect health, you know there is no true peace nor safety for you, even for a single hour."

Dr. H— came early on the following day ; and when he had left the room, Anna waited with a beating heart for her father's coming to fulfil his promise. After a short interval she heard the door open and close again after the doctor ; but minute after minute passed, each seeming to Anna like an hour—and still her father did not come. When at last he did appear his step was slow and his face full of grief. He sat down by Anna's bed and silently took her hand, while she gazed in his face with trembling earnestness.

" Tell me all, papa," at length she whispered, " is there no hope ?"

" My child, my dear Anna," said her father, " we cannot tell. Results are in the hand of God, and while he continues life we will not cease to hope. But I will not hide the truth from you. Dr. H— does think you very ill, and that it may be the will of God to take you from us."

Anna hid her face in her pillow, and wept long and bitterly : so bitterly, that her father's tender words of comfort and counsel were almost unheard. She saw herself obliged to meet the God whom she had forgotten, and the Saviour whom she had slighted, and deep was the agony that filled her mind at the prospect. All that day and the night that followed were spent in painful, restless tossings to and fro, while the agitation of her mind was rapidly increasing her bodily illness.

"It is of no use, Mary," she said, when her sister, during that sleepless night, was seeking to speak words of hope, "it is not with me as with most people. It is not from ignorance that I have rejected Christ, for I have had you and papa to entreat me again and again to seek him, but I had no heart to it : and it is only from fear that I am thinking of him or seeking after him even now."

"Well, dearest Anna, when God calls upon us as poor sinners to receive his dear Son, he does appeal to our fears. He tells us of his wrath against sin and of the everlasting burnings, just that we may be aroused to fear and to flee from that wrath in time."

"But he requires those who come to him to repent as well as to believe, and I feel nothing like repentance."

"The Lord Jesus gives repentance, dear Anna ; he is exalted to give it. Only apply to him just as you are, and he will give his Spirit both to show you your sin and to make you mourn for it."

"But, Mary, how can I insult him by going to him just out of selfish fear, when I know there is no love to himself in my heart?"

"He will give you that too—that, and all you need. You can never have anything that you ought to have until you come to him, for he must give you all. Only cast yourself empty and helpless at his feet, and you will not be cast out."

For many days Anna could receive no comfort from these truths ; but she was at length enabled by the Holy Spirit with faith to behold the Lamb of God : and in seeing her sins taken away by him, her heart was filled with love and with mourning for Him whom those sins had pierced. Now she was able to think of death, if not with joy, at least with calmness and peace ; but death she was not yet to be called to meet. The fears of those who loved her were all happily disappointed, and Anna rose in the truest and fullest sense to new life.

"You are strangely changed, Anna, since your illness," said a young friend, who came in one day and found Anna deeply engaged in her once forsaken studies; "you are always busy and always happy, and everything seems to come right to you now."

"Yes," said Anna, with a glad smile, "that was a happy illness to me. Everything does seem changed with me now."

"And what is the secret of the change?" asked her companion.

"Just this, I think," replied Anna; "I have all my life been trying, as I remember my dear sister used to tell me long ago, to satisfy myself with husks; and during that illness I found that which can satisfy indeed. How can I but be happy," she added, earnestly, "when I have him in whom is all fulness for my own Friend and Saviour? How can I help being busy when the love of Christ constrains me? Everything is right with me now, for he has said, 'I am with you always,' and I want nothing more."

And Anna did not this time find that she had been mistaken. She had learned to drink out of the living fountain; and when earth's broken cisterns were taken away, their loss moved her but little; that fountain was still full and satisfying as ever.

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

M. D.

JOHN ROGERS, ON THE BIBLE.

THE Rev. John Rogers, A.M., of Dedham, Essex, who died in 1636, was a grandson of the martyr Rogers. He was a most popular and useful preacher in his day. Bishop Brownrigge used to say, "John Rogers will do more good with his wild notes, than we with our set music."

Of his peculiar and impressive manner of preaching, we have the following instance related by the great John Howe, when preaching on the Divine authority of the sacred Scriptures; the circumstance was related to Howe by Dr. Thomas Goodwin. Dr. Goodwin being in his youth a student at Cambridge, and having heard much of Mr. Rogers, of Dedham, purposely took a journey to hear him preach on his lecture day: the lecture being then so frequented, that to those who came not early there was no possibility of getting room in that very spacious church.

Mr. Rogers was, at the time, on the subject of the Scriptures; and, in the course of the sermon, he expostulated with the people about their neglect of the Bible. He spoke in the name of God to the people, telling them, "I have trusted you so long with my Bible; you have slighted it; it lies in such-and-such houses, covered with dust and cobwebs; you care not to look at it. Do you use my Bible so? You shall have my Bible no longer!" Then he took up the Bible from the cushion, and seemed as if he were going away with it; but immediately he turned again, and personated the people, fell down on his knees, and cried and pleaded most earnestly,—“Lord, whatever thou doest to us, take not thy Bible from us! kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods; only spare us our Bible!” And then he personated God again to the people:—“Say you so? well, I will try you a little longer; and here is my Bible for you: I will see how you use it; whether you will love it more; whether you will value it more, and live more according to it!”

By these actions and speeches the congregation were remarkably affected, the place was a mere *Bochim* (a place of weeping), the people generally were deluged with tears; and Goodwin himself, when he got out, and was to take horse to be gone, was fain to have a quarter of an hour upon the neck of his horse, weeping, before he had power to mount; so strange an impression was there upon him, and generally upon the people, on having been thus expostulated with on the neglect of the Bible.

THE ARROW DRIVEN DEEPER.

A PASTOR'S SKETCHES.

FINDING it impossible, on account of the number, to have much conversation with each individual at the inquirers' meeting, I at one time abandoned the practice of individual conversation for a few weeks, and addressed all together. I found this was unacceptable, and therefore decided to return to the former custom. It was on one of those evenings, when many being present, I was passing rapidly from one to another, that I came to an individual who had never been there before. I asked, "What is the state of *your* feelings on the subject of your salvation?" "I feel," he answered, "that I have a very wicked heart." "It is a great deal more wicked than you think it," I replied, and immediately left him, and addressed myself to the next person.

I thought no more of the occurrence, till a few days afterwards, when he came to me with a new song in his mouth. He had, as he thought, found peace with God, through faith in Jesus Christ. "I want," said he, "to tell you how much good you did me. When I told you that I had a very wicked heart, and you answered that it was a great deal more wicked than I thought, and then said nothing more to me, I thought it a most cruel thing. I expected something different. I thought you would say more; and my soul was wonderfully cast down. I did not believe you. I was angry at your treatment. I thought you did not care whether I was ever saved or not; and I did not believe you knew anything about my feelings. But the words rang in my ears—'a great deal more wicked than you think.' I could not get rid of them. They were in my mind the last thing when I went to sleep, and the first when I woke. And then I would be vexed at you for not saying something else. But that was the thing which drove me to Christ. I now know it was just what I needed. I thought when I went to that meeting my convictions were very deep. But I have found out they were very slight. You hit my case exactly. If you had talked to me my burden would have been diminished; but you fastened one idea on my mind. You drove the arrow deeper, when I expected you to do just the contrary; and I could find no relief, till I gave up all into the hands of Christ. I know you read my heart exactly."

After some minutes' conversation with him, he said to me, "I want to ask you a question. I have been thinking of it a great deal, and I cannot conceive how you know what to say to each one, where there are so many. We have been talking about it, some of us, and we cannot understand how it is that you can know our thoughts and feelings, when nobody has told you. How can you tell what to say to one after another, when there are so many, and you have never seen some of them before, and they say so little to you?"

"I have only one rule on that subject," said I. "I aim to conspire with the Holy Spirit. If I perceive that any one truth has impressed the mind, I try to make its impression deeper; because the Holy Spirit has already made that impression, and I would not diminish it by leading the mind off to something else. If I perceive an error in the individual's mind, I aim to remove it; for I know that the error is of sin, and not of the Holy Spirit."

"But," said he, "our impressions are so very different."

"No matter. They are of the Holy Spirit, if truth has

made them; and He can choose the kind of truth which is appropriate to any sinner, better than I can. I just aim to conspire with the Holy Spirit."

Said he, "I am confident if you had said much to me, or anything to turn my mind away from that one thing, it would have done me hurt. You have no idea how you increased my trouble that night. I somehow wanted you to lighten my burden;—you made it heavier. Then I was soon led to see that none but God could help me. I had partly begun to think my heart was improving. I found out the contrary, and turned to God in despair. He gave me peace, through Jesus Christ."

THE REPRODUCTIVENESS OF GOOD DEEDS.

A bird may pluck a fruit from its stem, and convey it to a distant isle. There its seed may spring up; it may reproduce itself, until the island is covered with flowers, and converted into a scene of beauty and loveliness. When agriculturists require to lay down a piece of land for pasturage, they do it by a practice which they call inoculation; that is, they will insert small pieces of turf in the soil at short distances apart from each other, and from these centres they will grow and gradually extend, until the whole field is covered with verdure. So a Christian, by his efforts to do good, may unconsciously enlist others in the same pious labours; they, in their turn, may inspire more minds; and thus from the small seed deposited by the humble Christian may spring innumerable fruits and flowers of grace to fill and beautify the church of God.

A striking instance of this diffusiveness of Christian labour is found in the life of the pious major-general Burn. After the American war, Burn retired from active service on half-pay, and had, in consequence, much leisure time. As a Christian, he could not be idle. His mind laboured to find what it could do to promote the cause of Christ. He thought he would write a book for the benefit of soldiers; which was a most happy idea. A religious book, written by an officer of the army, would certainly attract the notice of soldiers. The book was published. It bore for its title, "The Christian Officer's Panoply, containing arguments in favour of Divine Revelation, by a Marine Officer." Among the fruits of this little book, there was one of peculiar interest. It attracted the notice of a gentleman who had spent many years in

India. He was an unbeliever in the Christian religion, and wholly indifferent to his soul's salvation. He read captain Burn's book, and was converted. That gentleman was captain James Wilson, so universally known as the generous commander of the ship "Duff". That vessel was sent by the London Missionary Society to the Pacific Ocean with a band of missionaries. Mr. Wilson gave his invaluable services on that voyage without any charge. Who can tell the benefits to the missionary enterprise which accrued from Mr. Wilson's generous and noble exertions? That infant effort to save the islanders of the Pacific might have failed but for him. Yet, had not Mr. Burn's book been written, captain Wilson, so far as man can judge, might have continued a sinner, and his labours for the missionary cause have been lost.

"BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD."

Oh do not weep
 For those who sleep
 Beneath yon grassy mound:
 They softly rest
 On Jesus' breast
 Till the last trumpet sound.

Their toil is o'er;
 They sin no more;
 Labour and sorrow cease:
 The fight is done,
 The victory won,
 And now they lie in peace.

Weep, rather weep,
 For those who keep
 A bitter deadly strife
 With Satan, sin,
 And the world within,
 Unceasingly through life.

Oh! who that knows
 These troubling foes
 Would back recall again
 The soul set free
 From misery,
 To earth's enthralled chain?

No, happy dead,
 Your quiet bed
 With tearful hope I view,
 Welcome the day
 When I shall lay
 My weary head with you!

Late Rev. J. H. Forsyth.



"WHAT GOOD PEOPLE YOU CHRISTIANS OUGHT
TO BE!"

DURING the time I was in Asia (said my friend) I had occasion to cross a part of the Arabian desert, towards the Red Sea. Of course on this journey it is necessary to have not only a guide but a body guard; and mine was composed of eight or nine as wild and picturesque-looking Bedouins as you would wish to see—true sons of the desert, and Ishmaelites of pure descent; there could not be much doubt about that.

They were faithful to me, however; and it was pleasant to gallop day after day amidst this lawless troop, sometimes conversing with the sheik in such Arabic as I had contrived to pick up, and at other times witnessing such feats of horsemanship as my guards pleased to exhibit for my amusement, or to practise for their own. In the heat of the day we struck our tents (such tents!), and rested, as we did also at night. Our mid-day slumber was often the most profound and the most prolonged.

One evening we had encamped as usual beside a muddy fountain, secured our horses, lighted our fire, and drunk our coffee. My guards were seated round the fire, smoking and talking, while I made an effort to sleep under cover of the

tent provided for my especial use. It was all in vain. The sheik had advised me of the probability of a night attack from a party of marauders, not of his tribe, whom he supposed to be in our neighbourhood, but had begged me not to be alarmed, for my life was precious in his sight, and safe in his hands: he would defend me to the last drop of his heart's blood.

It might be that I half believed the report, and more than half distrusted my respectable friend's bravery; or it might be that my siesta had taken off the edge of drowsiness, or that thoughts of home kept my mind busy, or that the coffee I had drunk served as an anti-soporific, or that the loud talking of my Bedouins disturbed me. In short, I could not sleep; and, tired of inaction, I left my tent, and drew near to the fire, which was very pleasant, for, hot as are the days of desert travelling, the nights are often chilly.

My guards made room for me as I came near; and, seating myself beside the sheik, I lighted my pipe; and looking at the grim countenances of the ragged fellows around me, each of whom was armed with pistols stuck into the belt, and a musket within reach of his hand, I wondered what my friends in England would think if, at that moment, they had seen me.

My presence did not much disturb the loquacity of my guards; but I paid little heed to their rapid conversation, till the sheik, turning suddenly round upon me, exclaimed,

"What strange men you Englishmen are!"

"How so?" I asked. "Why strange?"

"You never fast," said he.

"Not often," I replied, laughing; "that is, when we can get anything to eat."

My Arab friend laughed too, for that evening we had supped sparingly from necessity; "but," said he, "is it not part of your religion? and"—before I could reply—"I don't think you have any religion. You don't pray; you don't give alms; you do nothing."

This was a home thrust, and my conscience felt it. I had looked upon the poor fellows around me as so bigoted in their faith, and had considered myself so completely in their power, that I had deemed it prudent to avoid every topic that might rouse their passions. In my solitary tent, at mid-day, I had read the word of life; but I had concealed with jealous care from my guards the knowledge that I carried about with me "the Christian's Koran:" and when at morning and night I had commended myself in prayer to God my Maker, through

Christ my Saviour, I had drawn close around me the curtain of the tent, and whispered low and fearfully, lest I should be overheard. "You have no religion," said the sheik; "you don't pray; you do nothing."

"God forgive me," I thought. "The rebuke is not altogether unjust."

"Now we," continued my reprover; and he went on boastingly to tell what their prophet required of them, and how faithful was their obedience in matters of devotion, charity, and self-denial; and while he spoke I lifted up my heart to God, and sought courage to bear a feeble testimony to his word. When the sheik paused, I put my hand into my bosom, and drew forth a New Testament.

"I have religion," I said. "Would you like to hear what it teaches me on these high matters?"

"Certainly: would I tell him?"

By this time the attention of all my guard was directed to me. Their quick sparkling eyes were fixed, fiercely, as I thought, upon me, their dark visages looking more grim by the flashing fire around which they were seated; and their hands ready to grasp a weapon that would speedily bring down vengeance upon the head of the infidel dog who should dare to blaspheme their prophet.

"Listen," I said, as I opened the Testament at the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. "You speak of alms-giving; hear what my Koran says about giving alms;" and I rendered into Arabic the first four verses: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them," etc. When I stopped I looked up; and the dark countenances around me were glistening, but not with anger.

"Good!" exclaimed the sheik; "this is very good: go on."

I gathered courage, and read again: "And when thou prayest," etc. I read, translating as I read, to the fifteenth verse. Again I looked around me.

"Bismillah! but this is wonderful! wonderful!" exclaimed one and another, stroking their black beards; "wonderful!" and every harsh and forbidding feature was softened down to quiet, calm attention. "More, more."

I read on: "Moreover, when ye fast," etc.

"Bismillah!" exclaimed the sheik again—"but this is wonderful!"

I needed no further urging on. Verse by verse, paragraph by paragraph, I read on to the close of the chapter.

interrupted only by exclamations of wonder and approbation.

"Wonderful!" said my swarthy friend, the sheik, when at length I closed the book; "but this is wonderful. *And what good people you Christians ought to be!*"

I never, continued my friend, forgot, and I hope I never shall forget, the lessons taught me by that desert fire. In the first place, I saw, as I had never before seen, that caution may degenerate into cowardice; and I learned, in the second place—the enemies of Christianity themselves being our judges—that if the professed followers of Christ were but, in all things, what they ought to be, "like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus," then would they "with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and the constrained verdict of the unbelieving world would be, "Nay, but this is wonderful!"

G. E. S.

THE TWO EASERS.

It was the happy season of Easter; and Annie Lawrence, an amiable and affectionate little girl, was standing by the parlour window, arranging her stand of flowers, and warmly expressing her delight at having a fortnight's holiday.

"O mamma," she exclaimed, "how nice it is to stay at home with you all day, and have nothing to do!"

"Nothing to do, Annie! is that such a treat?"

"I mean that I have no lessons to learn, no exercises to write, and all that sort of thing, but merely to amuse and enjoy myself."

Her mother looked up from her needlework and smiled. "Then your idea of happiness consists entirely in self-gratification?"

Annie coloured slightly, and, after a moment's hesitation, replied, "No, mamma; I know that one way of being happy one's self is to try to make other people happy. But I don't see how I can do so, at least just now; I have no brothers nor sisters to please or take care of, and I have so little money to give away."

"You will meet with plenty of opportunities of being useful, Annie, even during a fortnight's holiday, if you have only a willing mind. I will not point out any now, because I would rather that you discovered them yourself."

Annie did not answer her mamma. She stood at the window

apparently in deep thought, and Mrs. Lawrence presently left the room. In a few minutes Annie's attention was arrested by the sight of a poor, thinly clad little girl, who had sat down to rest herself on an opposite step. She was very pale and forlorn-looking; her cheeks were thin; her eyes were heavy; and she seemed tired and feeble. On her lap was a small basket, containing a few little shell pincushions, some needle-books, and some kettle-holders.

"Poor little girl!" said Annie to herself, "how sad she looks! Perhaps she is hungry, and cannot get any money to buy food with. I wonder where she comes from, and whether she has a father and mother, and whether they scold her very much if she does not get rid of her pincushions. I might buy a kettle-holder of her for Betty; she was talking of making one the other day: and if the pincushions are pretty, two of them would do nicely for nurse's little children. It would be doing good in two ways, first to the poor girl, and then to the others. I will run and ask mamma if I may beckon to her to come over. Mamma said I was to try and be useful, and this will be a beginning."

Away ran Annie to her mother, and quickly gained her consent. The poor pincushion girl stepped forward with alacrity on seeing Annie's uplifted finger at the window, and offered her scanty stock for sale. She was very respectful; but there was a timidity and a slight hesitation in her manner, as if she were not perfectly accustomed to her employment; and she did not puff off her articles as such girls usually do, although she appeared very desirous to dispose of them. Both Annie and her mother were much interested in the poor little girl; and, when the purchases were made, they asked her several questions, and they asked them so kindly, that she quite brightened up, and was ready to tell them all that they wished to know. Her mother was very ill at home—that home was a small top room in the most wretched part of the town—and was entirely dependent on the precarious earnings of her child. Sometimes she could scarcely get sixpence a-day; sometimes she took more; but at the best they were nearly half starved.

"And you have no father, nor brothers, nor sisters?"

"No, ma'am; father died three or four years ago. We had plenty while he lived; but since that time we have been very badly off. Mother used to get a little washing and cleaning, and sometimes some needlework; but for the last two or three weeks she has not been able to work at all, and some of

our neighbours helped to buy a few things for me to sell again. Mother didn't much like it at first ; but I was glad to do anything that would bring in a little money for her : and I don't stand about in the streets ; I go to respectable houses, and the people or servants are sometimes very good to me."

The little girl spoke with a correctness and a propriety which showed that she had been well brought up ; and Mrs. Lawrence made her sit down and have something to eat, while she wrote the name and address of her mother, in order that she might ascertain the truth of the child's story.

"And what is your name?" said Annie, as her grateful little visitor rose to depart.

"Rose—Rose Dawson."

Rose! what a name for that pale, sickly, meagre-looking girl! It was very unsuitable, Annie thought; but she did not say so. She whispered something to her mamma before she ran to open the door to let Rose out; but Mrs. Lawrence shook her head, and Annie seemed disappointed. What had Annie said? Her own remark, after she returned to her mother, will tell you.

"Mamma, why didn't you wish me to give the poor little girl my half-crown for her mother? I could have done without a new story-book."

"Because, my love, it was too much to give at once to a stranger; we must be prudent as well as generous. Besides, I intend to find out the poor woman; and if she is really in want, as I believe she is, we will endeavour to relieve her."

"And may I go with you, mamma?"

"Yes, Annie, this afternoon, if the weather continues fine."

So that very afternoon Mrs. Lawrence and her little girl, with a well-filled basket, set out upon their errand of mercy. They had some difficulty in finding the narrow street, or rather court, which Rose had named, and when they had found it Annie wondered how any one could possibly reside in it.

"Oh, mamma, what a dirty, miserable place!"

"Yet it is in such places as this that thousands of our fellow-creatures live."

Annie kept close to her mamma, as, after a few inquiries, they began to ascend a narrow flight of dark, steep, broken stairs, for she felt rather timid, and had it not been for the recollection of Rose's pale features, would almost have wished herself at home again. Their gentle tap at the door was answered by a feeble "Come in;" and Mrs. Lawrence, followed by Annie, entered the room. It was small, crooked,

and badly lighted, but it was clean and tidy. On a low sort of bed there lay the poor widow, whose dim eyes and sunken cheeks plainly told how ill she was. She appeared much surprised to see such unexpected visitors, for Rose had not yet returned to give an account of her morning adventure; so Mrs. Lawrence sat down beside her on an old box, and told her, gently and briefly, through what channel she had heard of her distress, and how willing she was to render her some assistance. The poor invalid was so weak, that she was almost overcome by the joyful feelings which such kind words and such kind promises occasioned; but when she had taken a little wine, which had been brought in the basket, she recovered herself, and was able both to express her thanks, and to relate a little of her past history. There was the same refinement and intelligence of mind about her which her daughter had manifested; and Mrs. Lawrence found, as she had expected, that her previous life had been passed under different and happier circumstances. It would take too long to tell all that was then said; it is enough to mention that Mrs. Lawrence amply supplied the present wants of the sick widow, and arranged that Rose should give up her pincushion selling, and remain at home to attend upon her mother.

"Do not trouble about the future," said Mrs. Lawrence, kindly. "He who has now appeared on your behalf will provide for you in days to come; and all you have now to do is to strive and get well as fast as you can."

Rose returned just as Annie and her mother were going away; and when she saw the provisions on the table, and heard the plans for their present comfort, her bright looks eloquently spoke her gratitude. Poor child! she was so delighted with the happy change in their affairs, that she could scarcely keep herself quiet the rest of the day; and it would have done any one good to see what a hearty meal she made as soon as they were left alone. The widow's heart was filled with gratitude to God for his providential aid, and she felt that the earnest prayers which she had offered to him day by day were answered. She had feared that she should have to leave her orphan child without a friend in the wide world; and although she had endeavoured with faith to entrust her to the care of her heavenly Father, and to say, "Thy will be done!" her anticipation of such a trial had been very painful; but now, should she be called away, her little girl she felt sure would find a friend in the kind lady whom God had raised up for their help.

It was not, however, God's will that Rose should lose her

dear mother. Mrs. Dawson's illness, as the doctor said, who was sent to visit her, was rather the effect of want and sorrow, than the result of positive disease; and now that she had nourishing and sufficient food, she speedily regained her strength.

Annie's holiday was much occupied in thinking about Rose, and in working for her. The half-crown, with an additional shilling, was expended in the purchase of a new cotton frock for the little girl, for Annie was anxious to buy something for her with "her own money;" and Mrs. Lawrence gladly encouraged her self-denying efforts to do good to others.

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed Annie, at the close of her fortnight's holiday, "what a happy Easter this has been! I shall always remember it."

"I hope you will, dear," said her mother; "I hope you will often look back to it as a proof that forgetfulness of self is a sure road to personal happiness, while it is also a stimulus to renewed exertion. And the holy thoughts which this season has suggested to us, Annie, should strengthen our purpose to do more for the good of our fellow-creatures. Our Saviour died for us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again; and if we really love him, we shall increasingly strive to imitate that benevolence and unselfishness of spirit which so pre-eminently distinguished him.

And to Rose and her mother theirs had indeed been a happy Easter. Yet it was only the earnest of future prosperity, for Mrs. Lawrence and her warm-hearted little daughter were not satisfied with relieving the immediate wants of their poor neighbours, but were desirous to render them permanent help. Their laundress had lately died, and as Mrs. Dawson proved to be an excellent hand at getting up linen, they resolved, when she was well enough, to entrust her with their own washing, and to interest themselves in procuring her similar work from their friends. The poor widow had soon as much promised as was sufficient to provide for herself and child; a neat little cottage with drying-ground was engaged for her by Mrs. Lawrence, and she removed to her new abode. Rose could not be spared to go to school, for she was a valuable assistant to her mother; but Annie readily undertook to give her occasional instruction at times which were mutually convenient; and Rose, who was intelligent and persevering, learned, perhaps, more in this way than many girls do who regularly attend school. Rose was a nice, well-behaved child,

so that Mrs. Lawrence fully approved of the intercourse which subsisted between her and Annie; and the young teacher and her grateful pupil grew very fond of each other.

But this is a world of changes, and so Annie and Rose found it, for before two years had passed away an unexpected event caused their separation. An uncle of Mrs. Dawson's husband, who, on account of some foolish and trifling dispute, had long been estranged from, and indeed lost to his family, sent for his niece-in-law and her daughter to come and live with him. He had been very ill, and illness sometimes softens the heart—at least it softened his, and made him think of the poor widow, and offer her a comfortable home as his house-keeper and nurse. He had no nearer relations left than Rose and her mother, and he was tired of being attended on by strangers; so he found them out, and would take no denial; and, indeed, Mrs. Dawson did not think it right to refuse to go. She knew how much her husband would wish it if he were present; and she trusted that, while she ministered to the earthly comfort of the invalid, she might be able to speak a word in season about the Saviour of sinners. So she and Rose left the town of S—for a far distant part of the country, not, however, without many regrets and tears on bidding farewell to their kind friends. They met with a hearty reception on their arrival, and were soon happy and comfortable; but they did not forget the past. Their former trials and difficulties were frequently the subject of their thoughts; and very touching were the recollections which Easter week always brought with it.

* * * *

Easter week! Many, many years have rolled away since little Rose, with her basket of pincushions, sat down on the door-step to rest; but Easter has come again, and school-boys and girls are once more rejoicing, and industrious mechanics with their wives and little ones are enjoying a holiday stroll into the country.

In a narrow, dull-looking house, at this festival season, sits a pale and care-worn wife by the couch of her apparently dying husband. Delicacy of constitution, mental anxiety, and poorness of living, have made him unable to grapple with disease, and he is fast sinking to the grave. Change of air and generous diet might yet save him; but, alas! he can have neither, and he must die, as thousands do, for want of timely aid. He has fallen into a short and uneasy slumber, and his wife weeps beside him; but tears cannot send the vigour of

health into his weakened frame, nor provide for their urgent necessities. She is roused from her grief by the sounds of childish sorrow below, and fearful lest the noise should awaken the sleeper, she hastens down stairs, and is soon in the midst of a group of little ones.

"What is the matter with Charlie?" she says, pointing with her finger to the sick room above, as she takes the little fellow in her arms, and gently soothes him.

"Charlie wanted more to eat," replied an elder one; "and because we wouldn't let him have it he cried."

"He shall have some another time," says the poor mother, trying to speak in a cheerful tone; "we must not eat it all up to-night, and leave none for the morning."

"But I want it now," sobs the child, "I am so hungry!"

"And I am hungry, too, mother," pleads a meek, fair-haired little girl at her side.

It is enough to melt a heart of stone; and the sorrowful mother cuts them a tiny piece from the precious loaf, and then hurries away to hide her grief. Throwing herself on her knees by the bedside, and covering her face with her hands, she implores help of that God who bids us call upon him in the day of trouble. She asks that he who feeds the young ravens when they cry will supply her starving children with food. She prays as those only pray who are in need like hers.

Presently the tramping of little feet on the stairs interrupts her fervent petitions. "Mamma, mamma," says a little voice, in a loud whisper, "there is a lady wants to see you."

She hastens down stairs, wondering who it can be, and is greeted with much emotion by a stranger, a well-dressed and pleasant-looking lady.

"Ah, you have forgotten me," says the visitor, kindly and quietly; "you do not remember little Rose Dawson."

She sighs as she speaks, for she herself can hardly believe that the sorrowful wife and mother before her is the once graceful and blooming Annie.

Yet it is Annie; and this is their first meeting since they parted in early youth! Annie early lost her parents, and married what is called well; but unexpected losses and failures have reduced her husband and herself from one degree of poverty to another, and now they are almost destitute. Rose, who, on the death of her mother and uncle, became possessed of considerable property, has this evening discovered, by what is termed a mere accident, the painful situation of her youthful

benefactress and instructress, and has immediately hastened to her.

What ups and downs there are in life !

It is a sad meeting ; but Rose's natural liveliness soon puts a brighter look on things. She persuades Annie, after they have had a little conversation, to return to her poor husband, who is anxiously asking for her ; and then she sends out for abundance of provisions and fuel, and, with the aid of the delighted children, makes a blazing fire, and spreads a well-filled table. She slips quietly away before Annie comes down again to avoid any thanks, and soon dispatches a hamper filled with wine and other delicacies for the invalid. At the bottom is a folded paper, containing a bank-note, and these words are written on it : " Cast thy bread upon the waters ; for thou shalt find it after many days." Yes, the promise is fulfilled ; the early kindness of Annie is richly and unexpectedly recompensed. The joy which she imparted to the widow and orphan is now returned into her own bosom. The light which she cast over their dreary Easter now sheds its brilliant rays over hers. She gave, and it is given to her again, full measure, pressed down, and running over.

Will you take another peep at her dwelling the next morning ? Rose is there again, loaded with toys, and books, and various articles for the children ; she seems as if she cannot do enough for them all ; and her bright looks and animating words are as welcome as her gifts ; while Annie's pale face wears a smile something like the one which beamed there in former days, and her husband really appears to be already recovering his strength.

What a happy day they spent together ! They were not so merry, it is true, as in past times ; but there is a deeper and more chastened joy in their hearts, and they are filled with gratitude and love towards God and towards each other. With pious thankfulness they talk of the risen Saviour, on whom they depend for present grace and for future glory ; and then with simple confidence they ask, " He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things ?" Ah, what can sustain us in hours of sorrow, or protect us in moments of pleasure, but dependence upon God, and faith in Christ ? Without the religion of Jesus, we are not fitted either for the trials of adversity or the perils of prosperity. Annie had suffered much ; but the consciousness of her heavenly Father's love, and the assurance, therefore, that all things, however painful, were

working together for her good, sweetened the bitter cup which she had to drink, and made her "patient in tribulation." Rose's path through life had been smoothed and brightened; but when riches increased she had not set her heart upon them: the comforts she enjoyed had not wrapped her up in selfishness, nor drawn her affections from the kind Giver, for she had learned to remember her Creator in the days of her youth, and she strove in whatsoever she did to glorify him.

Dear reader, love God your Saviour, and serve him; and then, come joy or come sorrow, all will be well with you.

And now our simple sketch must draw to a close. Rose's grateful assistance rescued Annie and her children from the deepest distress, and her husband from an anticipated grave; and if your imagination, dear reader, can stretch across another twelvemonth, you may see Annie and her family on the next Easter eve sitting round a pleasant fireside, in the possession of health, happiness, and every comfort; while Rose—no longer Rose Dawson—with her kind-looking husband, has joined the cheerful group, and is relating to her eager little listeners the long-promised story of Annie and Rose; or, the First Happy Easter.

A NIGHT IN THE MOUNTAINS; OR, THE LOST SHEEP.

I WAS once benighted in the mountains in Switzerland. We had ascended many thousand feet high, and could not get down again, nor continue our way, when the night came on quickly and suddenly, without any twilight. The air was cold, and we were heartily glad to accept the accommodation of a very poor hut, kept by a widow and her daughter for the reception of such stray guests.

A large fire of wood was made up for us on the wide open hearth, and we gathered round it in the common room or kitchen, which was the only one the house afforded; and there we were glad to sup on some trout which the girl had taken in the beautiful mountain lake before the hut. Just as our supper had ended, a loud knocking was heard at the door, which quite alarmed us; but the old woman smiled at our fears, and saying there were no robbers in that country, arose and opened it. Two tall gaunt-looking men came in. I knew they were shepherds by their dress, for they had great cloaks made of the skins of the brown sheep, with the wool outside, which, having a hood to draw over the head, and long wide sleeves, gave the wearers a rather droll appearance.

The men had each a staff in his hand, the end cased in iron running nearly to a point, so that in climbing mountains, always partly covered with ice or snow, or leaping over rocks and broken places, they could sink the point into the ground, and support themselves as they sprang along.

They threw off their cloaks, and then with some surprise we saw that their clothes were torn to tatters here and there, as if they had been among briars and thorns. But it was in clambering among rocks, and down into precipices, that they had done this. Strong and hardy as these men were, and inured to great fatigue, they were very weary, and appeared almost to stagger as they walked in.

"Well," said the woman, in a voice of anxiety, "have you found it?"

"Thank God, yes," said one of the men; and then, seeing strangers were there, they pulled off their brown caps; but so weary were they, that they dropped down into a seat, without even waiting to be asked to take one. I could not help wondering what precious treasure they had found; a lost child, perhaps, I thought.

"Where is it?" asked the old woman.

"In the stable," he answered. "I made it a bed there, for it is wounded; it fell among the rocks. We carried it all the way, by turns, on our shoulders."

The old woman ran away to get them some refreshment. In the mean time we asked them what they had found, and were told it was a sheep—a sheep that had gone astray on the mountains. It had chosen to wander, silly thing, from the shepherd and the flock, and had fallen into a hollow at the foot of a precipice, where it lay for nearly three days, during which time had the poor shepherd been wandering after it, seeking it with great toil and anxiety. He had left all the rest of the flock to other care, and had thought only of his lost sheep. He had not cared for rest or food, but had spent the last two days in the wild mountains, with only a piece of black bread to eat, and a drink of the mountain stream for his thirst. At night his shaggy cloak was his bed. His clothes had been torn almost to bits, for he had climbed hard rocks, and gone down great precipices; but when he found the sheep, he remembered his trouble no longer; he laid it on his shoulders rejoicing, and, having carried it safely home, he had come to tell the glad tidings, and to repose his aching limbs.

The shepherd could hardly move or speak from fatigue; but when at length, with his comrade (who had only partly

partaken of his toil), he went away to lie down with his recovered sheep among the hay of the stable, we drew again around the fire ; and the old woman and her daughter still continuing to advert to the sheep and the faithful shepherd, one of our party took out a small Testament, and read a passage which had been so beautifully illustrated by the recent occurrence, and which in these mountains, where such conduct on the part of shepherds is common, would tell more strongly of the Saviour's love than it does in our own country. The passage is that in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, where our Lord said to the Pharisees and scribes who reproached him for receiving sinners, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it ? and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

The reader then went on to tell these poor dwellers in the mountains how all we like sheep had gone astray ; and how Jesus Christ, God's well beloved Son, came to seek and to save them that were lost ; how he, as the good Shepherd, had given his life for the sheep ; and though ascended up to heaven, and clothed with the glory he had with the Father before the world was, he yet remembered what he had borne, and what he had done for us men and for our salvation ; that he had not forgotten his sheep, who were scattered abroad through this wilderness world, but watched over them, cared for them, and rejoiced over them, as the Shepherd of their souls.

They listened with pleased attention, and joined in our remarks, apparently taking much interest in them ; and we felt it good, after having just contemplated the wonders of God in creation, to talk over the greater wonder of redemption, accomplished by the love of God in giving his only begotten Son to die for sinners, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

We had been providentially led to this hut to read the word of truth, and declare the gospel of love and mercy to its poor inmates ; and we could not but humbly entertain the hope that the few words then read and spoken may have fallen as seed into good ground, and have brought forth fruit to the glory of God.

S. B.

THORNS AND THISTLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

ANGER.

Soon after the conversation already related in a former paper between Mr. Hatton and his son, the latter was made very happy by the arrival of a cousin, whom he had not seen for some time, to pay him a visit. Henry was about his own age, and had, like himself, been carefully brought up by religious parents. He was, moreover, a clever lad, and the cousins greatly enjoyed each others' society.

A few days after he came, when about to arrange the plan of amusement for the morning, he told Alfred that his mother had desired him to visit her nurse, who resided somewhere near his uncle. "And," said he, "if you know where her cottage is, I should be glad if we walked there together."

"To be sure I do know where nurse Brown lives," Alfred replied. "My father is very fond of her, and lets her want for nothing. Let us be off to her cottage; it is a nice one, and you will be surprised to see what a pretty garden she has got. The poor old woman's greatest recreation is to cultivate flowers, which she sells to the ladies for bouquets. The profits she lays out for the benefit of her neighbours when they are sick, attending them, and reading the Bible for them."

Henry found, as he expected from this description, the good woman's cottage a picture of neatness. The little garden, at one end of it, was enclosed by a trim yew hedge; and before her door were a number of fowls, who were picking up the corn which nurse Brown occasionally threw to them, as she sat knitting on a sunny bench in front of the dwelling, her fine sleek cat coiled up, and sound asleep at her feet. Great was nurse's delight at seeing Henry, whose mother she had taken care of during her infancy and childhood, and concerning whom she had various questions to ask. When Henry had answered these, and presented some tokens of regard from his mother, she took the two boys to see her garden. Much did Mrs. Brown regret that the fragrant jonquils and other spring flowers were withered, she would so have liked that Mr. Henry could tell his mamma how fine they were; but her pinks and carnations were bursting forth from the buds, and their bright hues were eagerly pointed out for his observation.

They then repaired to the cottage, and Mrs. Brown was entertaining Henry with stories of his mother's young days,

when suddenly they were disturbed by a shout, and then a great barking as of many dogs outside. "Oh, they are in my garden; they will ruin everything—my carnations! my lupins!" cried the poor nurse, hobbling out, followed by Alfred and his cousin. She opened the little gate of her garden, still crying, "My carnations! my lupins! Oh, worse, worse; they are hunting my cat—Tabby, Tabby!" The uproar increased, the dogs in full cry pursuing the terrified favourite round and round the garden, to the utter devastation of the flowers, incited to this sport by the halloos of a young gentleman, who appeared much about the same age as the cousins. The cat, however, soon, by a dexterous spring, got upon a tree, and from thence to the roof of the cottage, where, by means of an open window, she was safely housed. Her mistress went in to receive and soothe her after her fright; and the stranger, laughing heartily at the whole scene, whistled for his dogs, and turned to go away.

Alfred, with cheeks flushed and eyes flashing, sprang towards him, and caught his arm. "Stop," he cried; "you shall not go one step till you have paid this poor old woman for the fright you have given her, and the mischief you have done."

"Shall not!" exclaimed the other; "a pretty expression for you to use towards me. Do you know who I am?"

"Yes," said Alfred, becoming still more excited by the haughty look which accompanied this question. "I know you are Lord N—'s son; but if you were the son of a prince, you have behaved with cruelty and injustice on this occasion, and in a way unworthy of a gentleman, and it is my duty to tell you so."

"Your duty!" he answered, again laughing heartily. "My valiant champion of cats and old women, you are very conscientious!" This taunt was too much for Alfred; he raised his arm to strike his new acquaintance, when Henry caught it and held it fast. "Forgive my cousin," said he to the stranger; "when he is cool I am certain he will regret this."

"Cool!" cried Alfred; "I only wonder, Henry, that you can be so cool. I thought you had more feeling. Can you, or ought you, to see a poor dumb animal cruelly treated, and a good old woman, your mother's nurse, injured, and not be angry?"

"To be sure he can," said the stranger. "He seems too sensible a young gentleman to be angry about such nonsense."

"I beg your pardon," replied Henry, with much gentleness. "I could not witness cruelty or injustice without feeling anger; and I must speak truth and say that you have been guilty of both. I do hope it was from thoughtlessness; but indeed you have done very wrong. To torment a dumb creature is offensive to Him without whose permission even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground; and I am sure you will regret having spoiled this little garden when you hear that the flowers were not only a source of amusement but of profit to a poor old widow."

The young gentleman at first looked as if he were inclined to get vexed at this plain speaking; but Henry's mildness overcame that feeling, and he coloured and looked down as if conscious that he had done wrong. He then bowed slightly to his reprover, and walked away, followed by his dogs.

As Alfred had ever been accustomed to make a friend of his father, and tell him even his thoughts, he and Henry related their adventure to Mr. Hatton exactly as it had occurred, when they were alone with him on the following morning. "Was I wrong, papa, in feeling anger against such improper conduct?" inquired Alfred. "You know that the passion was originally implanted in our nature to be employed in a right cause; and surely young Mr. N—'s conduct was quite sufficient to excite just indignation. I wish much to know if I were wrong."

"Try and answer that question yourself, Alfred," replied Mr. Hatton, looking very grave. "Examine the various causes of your excitement on the occasion, and you may ascertain whether it were altogether the just anger against sin which you suppose, or its 'abortive representation'—one of those stunted and unfruitful thorns into which sin has converted an originally right feeling."

Alfred coloured deeply, and hung down his head. "How shall I do this, father?" he asked.

"My dear boy, it is written, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Try the consequences of your anger by this test; compare the actions, words, and thoughts it led you to by the rule of God's word. For instance, it is written, 'The servant of the Lord must not strive'—'no striker,' 2 Tim. ii. 24; Titus i. 7. So far for actions, Alfred. Then as for words: did yours agree with the apostle Peter's injunction, 'Be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing?' 1 Peter iii. 9. Your thoughts are known only to yourself and the Searcher of hearts; but—"

"Oh! stop, dear father. I feel I have been very wrong; for surely I was indulging selfish resentment, while I fancied it was indignation against sin. I will apologise to young Mr. N— for my behaviour."

"Certainly, my son; and do not forget that you have offended another—One who, while he hated sin, loved the sinner. Oh! try for the future to remember his precept; and when you see a fellow creature overtaken in a fault, to 'restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted,' Gal. vi. 1. Still I would remind you that you cannot be too decided, though ever in this same spirit of meekness, in your protest against what is wrong. That there is a legitimate exercise of the passion of anger no one can doubt who knows that our Lord felt it against the self-righteous Pharisees; though at the same time, as we are told, he was 'grieved for the hardness of their hearts,' Mark iii. 5. And Paul says to the Ephesian Christians, 'Be ye angry, and sin not.' That my dear nephew Henry was enabled to act according to this suggestion in yesterday's adventure, I have reason to suppose from your account of the matter, my boys, and feel thankful that it was so, hoping that his behaviour may make an impression upon young Mr. N—'s mind in favour of the religion you both profess."

Just then the sound of a horse's feet was heard, and from the window they perceived this same young gentleman cantering up the avenue. He was shortly after announced, and entering, said to Alfred, "Will you forgive the manner in which I spoke to you yesterday?"

"Willingly," replied Alfred, "if you will also forgive my conduct, which was very improper."

They shook hands. "I will own," said the stranger, smiling at Henry, "that this young gentleman's words first awakened a suspicion in my mind that I may have been wrong in the whole matter; but I have had another teacher this morning, who has fully convinced me of it."

"May I ask who was that?" inquired Mr. Hatton.

"Yes, sir," he answered, colouring a little; "though, perhaps, you will laugh at me when you hear. It was old Mrs. Brown."

"You have seen her then?" said Mr. Hatton, pleased with the openness of his young visitor.

"Yes, sir. On telling my father of our yesterday's rencontre, he said I ought to remunerate Mrs. Brown for the mischief I had done her, and that my conduct was ungentle-

manlike. Ah! she made me see that it was something worse still. When I went to her she would take no money, but accepted my apology at once. The poor old woman said, and, indeed, sir, she seemed to say it from her heart, that she would forgive me if I had done her a far greater injury than spoiling her garden; that she had often done wrong herself, and He who died upon the cross to save sinners had freely forgiven her; therefore, she said, she must, out of love and gratitude, do what she could to please him, and he had commanded her to pardon those who injured her. She said more than this, sir; she told me that I, too, needed his forgiveness, and would not be happy, here or hereafter, till I obtained it. She spoke of his goodness and love. In short, sir, she made me think about such things as I never did before. Strange, that a poor ignorant old woman should influence one like me; and yet, as none of you laugh at me, I will acknowledge that it is on her suggestion I come to ask Mr. Alfred Hatton's pardon."

His hearers did not indeed laugh at him, but looked highly pleased. A conversation followed, in which Mr. Hatton endeavoured to strengthen the good impression which nurse Brown's words seemed to have made on the mind of the young man. He invited Mr. N— to spend the day with Alfred and Henry; and, on the invitation being accepted, the cousins told him of a plan which they had arranged to visit nurse Brown, and repair the injury done to her garden. Their guest gladly agreed to share in this labour, proposing to send a note to his mother's gardener, with a request that he would immediately forward to the cottage a basket of choice plants, that they might fully repair all the loss sustained by the widow. This was accordingly done, the three young gentlemen engaging heartily in the work, in which N— acknowledged that he found more pleasure than in any of the mischievous amusements which had hitherto engaged his attention. E. F. G.

THE TWO BLACKSMITHS.

'Tis pleasant on a winter's night,
When snow lies on the ground,
To see the flaring earth, and hear
The ringing anvil sound.

EVERY one who knows the village of Stoke, is aware that it is a long, straggling place, with little bustle, and still less beauty. True it is that it has a church, with a sundial over the porch to the south, a yew-tree, a horse-block by the grave-

yard gate, a green, and a pile of stones (on which once stood a cross); as well as a few shops, some good houses, and numerous cottages, like many other villages; but these are so scattered that old Marlow, the clerk, used to say, "A stranger, placed in the churchyard, might look for the village a long while before he found it."

A very rare thing it is for two blacksmiths to ply their calling in the same village, nor is it likely that this would have been the case at Stoke, had it not been for the unusual length of the place. The smithy of John Boucher was perhaps something more than a measured mile from that of Henry Allen. Boucher and Allen were very opposite characters, though both of them were good workmen. It does sometimes happen, that men of a dissolute turn are more skilful in their business than their more sober neighbours: though this is not often the case, it does occur now and then, and so it was with regard to Boucher and Allen.

John Boucher, who had some good qualities at the bottom, had long been an inhabitant of the village, and a frequenter of the Fighting Cocks. His motto was, "Work hard and play hard." This was in fact nothing more than an excuse for his outbreaks, as it seemed to say, if I do take a little recreation, when I am at my business I make amends for it. He was one of those hot-headed, hasty, wilful men who seldom do things by halves, at one time welding away at his anvil from the rising till long after the setting of the sun, and at another wasting two or three days together at the public-house. John prided himself in being the best blacksmith and the hardiest boxer within a dozen miles of his own habitation.

Henry Allen was a new comer, and never would have settled at Stoke at all, had it not been that his aged mother had removed there to live with a married daughter, and that some of the farmers round had promised to employ him, telling him, at the same time, that the village being large there was plenty of room for another blacksmith, Boucher having more work than he could attend to. Allen was truly pious, and fully believed the words, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord." True it is that neither parts nor piety will prevent a man from being visited with affliction and sorrow, but there is a striking difference in the way in which these visitations are endured; for while a worldly man will give way to unthankfulness and impatiently repine, the language of one who fears God is, "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Lam.

iii. 39. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law," Psa. xciv. 12.

There are very few people who like others of the same trade to set up in business near them; no wonder, then, that one with so little command over his temper as Boucher possessed, should give way to turbulence and passion. There was plenty of work that he could not do, but acting on the principle of the dog in the manger, he neither took it himself, nor willingly allowed it to another. Boucher regarded Allen as an enemy. "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools," Eccl. vii. 9. It is not improbable, however, that John Boucher, had he been left to himself, would have cooled in his temper, and, by degrees, have felt less bitter against Henry Allen, but the mischief-maker was abroad. There are very few villages which have not, in some shape or other, a tattler and tale-bearer, and the village of Stoke was by no means an exception to the general rule. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer," Lev. xix. 16.

Frank Field was one of those hangers-on who cling closely to all from whom they can get anything. Boucher, in his cups, was liberality itself, and Frank failed not to turn this to account by his fawning and flattery. Tale-bearing is bad enough when it is true, but Frank Field seldom kept to the truth, and if he had a delight it was in setting others together by the ears. Many a family feud, and many a heart-burning between one neighbour and another that took place in the village of Stoke, might have been traced home to the tattling, tale-bearing, scandal-spreading propensities of Frank Field. Frank hated Allen because he could get no power over him.

In one of Frank's calls at the smithy of Henry Allen, he spoke thus: "It is a great pity that you and Boucher are not friends." They say, 'two of a trade can never agree,' but I see no reason why you should not. Boucher will have it that your coming to set up against him is downright robbery, but, as I say, every man has a right to do the best he can for himself—and then he has more work than he can do already. However, if I were you, I would keep away from him, for, in the temper he is in, may be he might do you a mischief." Having sown this seed of alienation in Allen's heart, Frank Field took his departure. There is in God's word a blessing for the peace-maker, but none for the tattler and the slanderer.

Henry Allen who had every desire to be on terms with

John Boucher, and who indeed was, at that time, looking out in all ways to do him a friendly turn, concluded that if he was really so very bitter against him, he had better at present be still. He did not fail, however, to petition at the throne of grace that the anger of his opponent's heart might be taken away, and that they might yet live in peace and good will, helping and not hindering one another. Worldly men often say they can forgive, but not forget; and our heavenly Father can alone dispose us truly to forgive an injury. Nothing short of God's goodness and grace can enable us to fulfil the Divine injunction, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," Matt. v. 44.

From the smithy of Henry Allen, Frank Field made the best of his way to that of John Boucher. "I have been calling on Harry Allen," said he, "just to tell him a little of my mind. I am not a blacksmith, but I can tell by the handling of his tools whether a man understands his business as well as another, and I should say, so far from Allen being a workman, that he is not fit to blow your bellows for you. It puts me out of all patience to see his conceit; he could hardly be prouder if you were his journeyman. Says I, 'Allen, your skulking into this parish, to set up against your betters, is like taking the bread out of an honest man's mouth, and if John Boucher had not borne it better than many would have done, he would never have let you off so easily.'"

"Thank you, Frank," said Boucher, as he stood still with his hammer in his hand, for he had given over his welding at the anvil to listen—"Thank you, Frank," said he, "I owe you a share of a pot when we next meet at the Fighting Cocks, and for the matter of that we may as well go there now." So away they went and made a night of it, Boucher getting into a broil with the ostler.

The next evening, when the hearth on Allen's smithy was all of a flare, and Allen himself hard at work, up comes Frank to practise another piece of deceit. "I wish John Boucher was a sober, quiet, peaceable man like you," said he, "but that is not the case. He was in his cups last night, and got quarrelling with Aaron the ostler, but he is fond of fighting, and I only wish that he could meet with his match."

"Perhaps he will some day," said Henry Allen, "but it is a pity that he should follow so bad a practice. We have all of us temptations and sins enough to fight against without quarrelling with one another. The apostle says, 'Let all bitter-

ness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you,' Eph. iv. 31, 32. In the parish where I lived before I came to Stoke, there was a noted boxer that could beat everybody, but for all that he met with his match in my smithy."

"Did he?" said Frank, staring with wonder.

"He did," replied Allen, "one that could keep up the game with him as long as he liked, and give him enough of it; but fighting is a poor trade at the best. An angry man is always in danger: 'He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls,' " Prov. xxv. 28.

Not half an hour had passed after this conversation before Frank was standing beside the anvil of John Boucher, giving a new version of all that had been spoken.

"What do you think Allen has the impudence to say about you, Mr. Boucher?"

"I can't tell," replied Boucher, hammering and talking loud at same time. "Such a fellow as that would say anything about anybody, but he had better mind what he is at."

"I happened," said Frank, "to be speaking about you. Says I, 'there is not a finer spirit than his anywhere, and as for a fair stand-up fight, though I am no boxer, I should say that his match is not to be found.' No sooner were the words out of my mouth, than he snaps me up by saying, that if John Boucher wanted his match, he had only to take the trouble to walk as far as his smithy."

"What!" said Boucher, in a thundering voice, lifting up his eyebrows, and leaving off his labour, "does he mean to challenge to fight me?"

"Nay, Mr. Boucher," said Frank, "I tell you what he says—what he means is only known to himself. He wants the conceit taken out of him, and I think I know one who could soon do him that piece of service: I don't think John Boucher is the man to take a challenge from any one."

With a very red face and a very hot heart, Boucher sallied forth at once in quest of his rival, whom he found hard at work, little expecting the visitor who was about to burst upon him. Almost choking with anger, Boucher demanded to know if he had sent him a challenge, for that Frank Field had given him to understand as much, saying, that he had only to walk down to his smithy to meet with his match, who would keep up the game as long as he liked, and give him enough of it?

Allen, in a mild but firm tone of voice, told him there must be a mistake somewhere, for that he was not the man to send any one a challenge, much less John Boucher, who had never injured him. "So far from having an unkind feeling against you," said he, "I would willingly go twenty miles to do you a kindness."

True it is that "a soft answer turneth away wrath." John Boucher was considerably mollified by Allen's words, and still more by his manner; but Allen went on to explain what had really been spoken.

"All I said was," said he, "and that was spoken by way of joke, that the first boxer in the parish in which I last lived, met with his match in my smithy. And so would any other boxer now, who had a mind to fight with him."

"And where is this match of yours?" said Boucher, whose anger was beginning to rise again.

"Here," replied Allen, pointing to Boucher's shadow that was flickering on the walls; "you will never meet with any other match here, and hardly will you deny that if you like to fight with him he will keep it up as long as you like, and give you enough of it." Hasty as Boucher was he dearly loved fair play; he had good sense enough to see that he had no reasonable ground of offence against Allen, and before taking his leave he offered him his hand.

The next time Frank Field called on John Boucher, the latter told him all about what had passed between him and Allen. "Yes, Mr. Boucher," said Frank, "that is just like him; I half expected he would try to back out of it when he saw you were not to be trifled with. You don't know him; he is no better than a snake in the grass, and is trying to supplant you. I understand he has got the order for the curious piece of iron work that the squire, the churchwarden, and a few of our gentry want for some purpose or other."

"How do you know that?" said Boucher, who had expected the job.

"I called on him an hour ago to tax him with it, and he did not deny it; all he said was, that if you thought evil of him and would come down to the meeting at the school-room to-night, he would make you ashamed of yourself."

There was but very little truth in all this—but as Boucher felt very bitter on account of losing the order for the iron work, he went to the meeting in a sad angry spirit. Just as he entered the school-room, Henry Allen, whose back was towards him, spoke thus to those who had assembled.

"Gentlemen, I thank you for applying to me for the piece of work you want, but I don't feel myself equal to it, and I know but one man that is. There are plenty of blacksmiths within a dozen miles of this place, and some of them clever fellows too, but there is not one of them that can handle a hammer and turn out a piece of work like John Boucher."

Any one who at the end of this speech looked at John might have pitied him, for he was utterly confounded. It would be of no use to attempt to draw his picture. A sunflower nipped by the frost, would be but a poor illustration of it. Nothing could be plainer than the truth, that his suspicions about Henry Allen were altogether unjust, and that he was heartily ashamed of himself.

No man passes through the world without trouble, and trouble came now running on John Boucher like a giant. It took a great deal to humble him, but he was humbled at last. The fever pulled down his strength and subdued his spirit, so that the mighty man became feeble as a child, the lion as tractable as a lamb. Nor was it the fire within him alone that helped to bring him low. A fire, from which he narrowly escaped with his life, broke out in his dwelling and burned it to the ground. In these afflictions Henry Allen was a steady friend. He did all he could to keep his business together for him, visited him in his sickness, read God's holy word to him, and prayed with him. When the Holy Spirit teaches, rapid progress is made. Boucher became another man, abhorring his evil courses, repenting in dust and ashes, and fleeing from the wrath to come to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. When Boucher recovered from his sickness, Henry Allen lent him a little money, so that after a time he was heard again hammering away in a new smithy, on the same spot where the old one had stood.

As time rolled on changes took place in the village. Frank Field became an irreclaimable vagabond; Henry Allen rose rapidly in the respect of all around him; and Boucher, though he lost his reputation as a great drinker and a hardy boxer, maintained his credit as a good blacksmith, and a consistent Christian man. A pleasant sight it was, on the Sunday morning, to see him and Allen heartily shaking hands with one another when they met before entering the house of the Lord, to "acknowledge their sins before God, to render thanks for the great benefits received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul."

Allen and Boucher were like brothers. For many years they continued to work at their smithies, setting forth these truths to all around them, that a drunkard may be reclaimed ; that two of a trade may agree ; that "godliness with contentment is great gain," and that there were not firmer friends in the village of Stoke than John Boucher and Henry Allen, the two blacksmiths.

Old Humphrey.

ANDRIES STOFFLES ON THE SABBATH.

THE Hottentot Christian, Andries Stoffles, at a meeting of the directors of the London Missionary Society, on the eve of his departure for his native land, expressed himself as follows :—

"I bless God that I have spent some time among the best friends of my native land. I have seen the zeal of British Christians, felt the influence of their love to myself and my countrymen, observed their large solicitude for our welfare, seen how the love of Christ has constrained them, and I love to think that with such, myself and multitudes of my restored, ransomed, redeemed countrymen will sit down together in the company of the Redeemer, from every people, and tribe, and tongue, and that we shall sing the new song together. And now I bid you an affectionate and a grateful farewell. I go back with my heart full, more than I speak with my tongue ; and I will tell my Hottentot brethren and sisters all that these eyes have beheld of missionary pity for the lost, which dwells so richly among you, in all the cities and towns which, at your request, I have visited ; but *I will not tell my countrymen of all I have seen on your sabbaths ; of your railways, your steam-boats, your tea-gardens, and of the multitudes who desecrate or who keep not God's holy day.* Oh, no ! I will not tell them of these, lest they should wonder how it can be that such things are done in Christian England, whilst so many holy and good men, brethren, and sisters, have such love for us, and for our souls' salvation. May the blessing of the Lord be ever upon you, my dear sir, and all my dear brethren around this table."

This testimony is commended to those who would relax the "puritanical rigours" of sabbatic observation.

EFFECT OF A TRACT.

A POOR pedlar, a humble but zealous Christian, stopped at the house of a rich man, and tremblingly knocked at the door. The master himself came and purchased a tract, called the "Bruised Reed," by Dr. Sibbs. He threw it carelessly aside.

and thought no more of it; but the Lord had destined it to an important end. That small despised tract the rich man's son saw and read, and by the Holy Spirit's power it became to him the means of saving grace; that son was the celebrated Richard Baxter, who wrote the "Saints' Rest." But the conversion of one soul does not end there; that soul is much concerned for the souls of others, and seeks to know what the Lord would have him to do, and in a variety of ways his influence spreads, and the little leaven leavens a large lump. Baxter is dead; but he has left us his "Saints' Rest," which was the means of converting Dr. Doddridge. That holy man died; but the mantle fell on others, and the leaven did not fail, for he left us his "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," and that conveyed the flame to that holy politician and zealous Christian, Wilberforce. He also died; but his influence was not extinguished, for his "Practical View of Christianity" communicated Divine light to Legh Richmond, who now lives in his "Dairyman's Daughter," and other works, to convey comfort, and perhaps conviction, to many hearts. All this had its rise in one "small tract." Surely God chooses the weak things of this world to confound the strong; and when, in the realms of unfading felicity, these blessed spirits meet, how will they praise and adore God for his love in thus appointing them to be the messengers and ministers of his mercy to each other's souls, and to multitudes yet unborn!

ORIGIN OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

GREAT results have not unfrequently followed from apparently trifling and accidental causes.

Some time in 1802, the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, meeting a little Welsh girl in the village, asked her to tell him the text from which he had preached the Sunday before. She was silent. "Can you not tell the text, my little girl?" said he. At length she replied, "The weather has been so bad, sir, that I could not get to read the Bible." He soon found out what was meant: there was no copy of the Scriptures in the neighbourhood, and the child had to go seven miles, over the hills, to a place where she could see a Welsh Bible to refer to the Sunday's text.

Mr. Charles was hence led to make inquiries, and to ascertain the existing want of the Scriptures in Wales, and ultimately to come to London in the latter part of 1802, to try to obtain help for supplying the people with Welsh Bibles. It is related

in his biography, that the subject being much on his mind, while lying awake in bed the idea occurred to him of having a society for the purpose in view, like the Religious Tract Society.

On the 7th of December, 1802, Mr. Charles attended a meeting of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, and after relating how destitute the people in Wales were of the word of God, his idea of a society for supplying them with the Scriptures in Welsh was developed. A member of the Committee, the Rev. Joseph Hughes, exclaimed, "A Bible Society for Wales? Why not for the empire, and for the world?" The result of that morning's deliberation was embodied in the following minute of the proceedings of the Religious Tract Society.

"Mr. Charles, of Bala, having introduced the subject which had been previously mentioned by Mr. Tarn, of dispersing Bibles in Wales, the Committee resolved that it would be highly desirable to stir up the public mind to the dispersion of Bibles generally, and that a paper in a magazine to this effect may be singularly useful. The object (namely the general circulation of the Bible,) was deemed sufficiently connected with the object of the Society thus generally to appear on the minutes; and the secretary, who suggested it, was accordingly desired to enter it."

This minute is *the germ* of the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, which, after much consideration and the lapse of above fifteen months, was formally constituted on the 7th of March, 1804.

This Society has expanded to its present magnitude and efficiency as a powerful agent for the dissemination of the word of God throughout the earth, and has now entered upon its fiftieth or jubilee year, which is in course of celebration. But while it fills the mind with its myriads of copies of the word of life, the heart will turn with interest to the little Welsh child who "could not get to read the Bible," as God's instrument in setting this great agency on foot.

CHRISTIAN CONFIDENCE.

A CHEERFUL confidence I feel,
 My well placed hopes with joy I see;
 My bosom glows with heavenly zeal
 To worship him who died for me.

As man he pities my complaint,
 His power and truth are all divine;
 He will not fail, He cannot faint,
 Salvation's sure, and must be mine.



THE OLD COWSLIP-SELLER.

It is a pleasant time when the cowslips begin to appear in the meadows, and little children gather them and suck the honey from their golden petals, or weave them into chains rolled up in balls, or take home loaded baskets to make cowslip wine.

The flower and the season bring back the recollection of one, whose appearance was once familiar in the north of London. Many years ago in the early spring-time, an aged man, attired in a clean smock-frock, with ruddy face, snow-white hair, and palsied head, might have been seen regularly in the outskirts of the town, selling cowslips. His head and hands trembled much, and so did his voice, which had a strong country accent. It so happened that the cowslip was a great favourite with one member of our family, which made us good customers. To the dwellers in a dusty town, the poor old man's basket of freshly-gathered flowers, with the early dew still glittering upon them, was a pleasant sight enough. He always singled out for us the largest bunch, and would add a few extra cuckoo-flowers when he came to know that we liked to see their pale lilac blossoms mingling with the golden hue of the cowslip. He was a man of few words, but of a meek and thankful spirit. Many*were the little hoards of cake, etc., put aside by the

children of the family against his coming, and of which he never partook without first lifting up his withered and palsied hands to bless God. Happening on one occasion to have some very fine lettuce given to us, upon asking the old man if he would like one of them for his supper, the offer was gratefully accepted, and then he paused in some hesitation. On our inquiring the cause, he said humbly, "If I might only have a little sup of vinegar to it?" and then sat down and enjoyed his frugal meal.

Sometimes his wife accompanied him, but not often. She was a loud-voiced, hard-featured woman, many years younger than her husband; who appeared to dread her almost as much as we did, and never seemed to be himself when she was by. She told us that he was growing old and childish, and that she had a great deal of trouble with him at times, at which his palsied head shook more than ever, but he never contradicted her. It was evident that they were very poor, and from his own account, often wanted bread; but we did not find out until long afterwards the sad, and, alas! not uncommon cause of all this. We have said that the old man was of a thankful spirit. If any one observed to him that it was a fine day, he would reply, "Yes, thank God!" When anything was given to him he thanked God first, and then the giver. He had a habit of looking up and talking to himself, especially when pleased or grateful, and from the few words occasionally distinguished—his speech was never very clear—we believe it to have been the utterance of praise and thanksgiving. As the seasons varied, his basket sometimes contained other and rarer flowers, but not often, as such are more difficult to procure; or chickweed and groundsel, and in the winter-time nothing but a few bundles of matches (lucifers not being invented in those days); but the sight of that white and palsied head was of itself sufficient to excite sympathy and compassion.

One cold evening towards the end of March, the wife of our poor old pensioner came to the door weeping bitterly, and told us that he was dead, and that she had no money to bury him. The small sum solicited as a loan was readily advanced, and not without tears. We did not wonder to hear of his death, for the winter had been more than usually severe, and the last time we saw him, although he uttered no complaint, he was evidently suffering from its inclemency; neither did we grieve for him overmuch, for his had been a hard and weary life, and he evidently seemed prepared for the better life with the Saviour.

A month passed away, and the time for cowslips had come again, when a servant astonished us one morning by declaring that she had seen our poor old man standing in the usual place with his basket full of them. "Impossible!" we involuntarily exclaimed; but as the girl continued to persist in her statement, little more was said then, although no one believed it, concluding that she must have been mistaken. A few days afterwards, however, proved her to be right, for standing where we had first seen him, and where he had stood so many years, with his basket before him, and his white scanty hair waving to and fro in the wind, sure enough was the old cowslip-seller.

"Why, we thought you were dead!" was our first hurried exclamation.

"Did *she* say so?" inquired the old man, with a sudden gleam of intelligence. "Did she ask for money?"

"Yes, to bury you with."

"God forgive her," he replied; and one large tear fell among the cowslips. "I fear you will never see your money again."

We told him that we did not so much care about that, seeing him alive and well. The poor old man's head shook more than ever. His reply was unintelligible, but the upward glance, and quivering lip, together with the few words we now and then distinguished, made us fancy that he was praying to God to be pleased to take him to himself. He had been ill, he told us afterwards, and was still very weak, but he would come to us as soon as ever he could walk so far: he had intended to come. But he never came again. His faltering voice blessed us as we turned away, and we saw him no more. We learned with certainty that soon after this the poor old cowslip-seller died in reality.

Speaking of him one day in the presence of a kind and benevolent lady, a district visitor in a poor and benighted neighbourhood, she immediately recognised the old man from our description, and we are indebted to her for a few additional particulars of his sad and weary life. She believed him, she said, to have been a humble and sincere Christian; but his wife was a bad woman, on whose account few ventured near the house where they dwelt, and even if they had he was seldom to be found at home. Every morning, let the weather be ever so inclement, she dressed the old man in his clean smock-frock, fastened the basket over his shoulders, filled, according to the season, with flowers, or a few bundles of matches, and sent him forth on his daily wanderings. The

greater part of what money he brought home was consumed by the wife during his next absence, at the public-house. When he was less successful than she expected, the old man often had to go to bed supperless. In the winter time, or when he was too ill to go out, they were badly off indeed, and must have starved but for the kindness of their neighbours—neighbours almost as indigent as themselves ; but the poor are often very kind to one another. Every one united in describing the cowslip-seller to be a harmless, inoffensive old man. A neighbour's child used to gather the cowslips for him in the early morning, and the little fellow was much attached to him, and wept when he died. He had, as we have said, a habit of talking to himself, from which many concluded that he was not in his right mind ; but he very seldom uttered a word to any one else. Often when he went forth in the morning, the neighbours never expected to see him return again alive, but " God," as he once said, " took care of him." The lady above mentioned recollects hearing of his death, which took place in the spring time ; and that it was considered by those among whom he dwelt to be a blessed release. " Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

E. C. Y.

THE WELSH BOY ; OR, FRUITS OF EARLY INSTRUCTION.

EVAN JONES was the son of a soldier who had fallen in battle, when he was but a few months old. His mother, on losing her husband, had returned with this her only child to her native village amidst the mountains of Wales, where, by her industry, she supported herself and her son, and hoped to be able to bring him up in godly principles, and sober, industrious habits. God ordered things otherwise, for she died when her child was but three years old. She had not been able to lay by anything, but she died in full trust that God would provide for the orphan, and recommending him to the care of two friends, who attended her with much kindness during her sickness.

As Martha and Susan returned from Mrs. Jones' funeral, leading the orphan Evan between them, old Martha said, " Susan, I have thought much, and prayed God to guide me, and to make my way plain before me, but I cannot find how to manage for this dear child. For the sake of her who is gone, I would willingly take the care of her son upon me ; but you know how nearly blind I am, and our doctor gives me no hope of cure ; on the contrary, he thinks I must expect total darkness soon. How, then, can I take charge of so young a

child? You, dear Susan, loved his mother as a sister, can you not help me to form some plan for the good of her child?"

"Oh," said Susan, "I make no doubt that, with the blessing of God, the child can be well cared for between us. I am strong and healthy, and though poor, am able to labour hard; but you know my work takes me so much from home in the day, and now I must work in the evening too. The dear boy can live with me and share my loaf, if while I am out you keep him with you. Our cottages are so near to each other, that he can go backwards and forwards even now alone."

Thus these good women arranged for the little orphan's provision. That evening old Martha sat by her fire, thinking of the friend she had lost, and regretting her own ignorance, for she could not read, and therefore could do but little to instruct the child, for whose welfare she ardently wished. She had just offered a prayer for wisdom to guide him in the way he should go, and to train him in the path of godliness, when Evan entered the cottage. He took the little wooden stool, and placing it at her feet, sat down on it, and laying his head on her lap, began to weep. Martha asked why he cried. He said he was crying for his mother; he did not know where she was gone, or when she would come back to him. Martha could scarcely restrain her own tears, but she tried to comfort him, and to explain in language suited to his understanding, that his mother was gone to be happy, living with the Lord Jesus Christ, who had sent for her, because he loved her, and that he loved little Evan too, and would teach him to be a good boy, if he prayed to him, and would show him the way to heaven, and then when he died, he, too, would be with Jesus Christ. Old Martha regretted that she could not afford to buy cakes or toys to give the child, for she feared, without some such inducement, he could not like her society, but she was agreeably surprised when at parting even that first evening, the boy put his little arms round her neck, and kissing her, asked leave to come again to-morrow. When he came next day he brought a little jug of milk, and a large piece of bread, saying that Susan was gone out for the whole day, and had desired him to bring his dinner to eat with Martha. Although she could not read, Martha knew a good deal of the Bible by heart, and she taught Evan some short simple texts; and when he had learned to repeat them correctly, she told him some Scripture story, as a reward; and in the course of a few months, Evan knew and understood more of Scripture than many children who attend school every day. In this way

Evan lived for a few years, nor was he brought up in idleness. As soon as he was old enough he was sent out into the fields and roads with the neighbours' cattle, to keep them from straying, and to drive them home in the evening.

The immediate neighbourhood in which Susan and Martha and Evan lived was very secluded ; a stranger was rarely seen, even in the summer season, when so many tourists visit the Welsh mountains for the sake of its fine scenery ; but when Evan was about twelve years old, as he was tending some cows one day in an open field, a gentleman, who was spending a few days in a village two or three miles distant, strayed thus far, led on by his admiration of the mountain valley, and not knowing which path to take to get back to his inn, stopped and asked Evan to direct him. Struck by the open, artless countenance of the boy, and pleased with the unembarrassed yet modest and respectful manner in which he answered him, he continued his conversation with him, and soon learned his little history. The affection with which Evan spoke of Susan and old Martha still further interested the stranger, and before he returned to the village where he sojourned, he went to Martha's cottage. Seeing few strangers leads perhaps to greater cordiality of manner towards those who do visit secluded hamlets, and this gentleman thought he had never been received with greater hospitality than in the cottage of this poor old blind woman, who had nothing but bread and cheese to set before him. He returned next day to visit her, and then met Susan too.

After a few more visits to these women he proposed to them to take Evan with him, when he should return to London, as he meant to do next day but one, and to train him as a servant, a situation which would be better for him than remaining as a mere cow-boy amongst the mountains. Susan, on hearing that the boy was to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, as part of his training for a servant, agreed at once, but old Martha hesitated. "London," she said, "she had heard, was a dangerous place. Evan would be exposed to much temptation and danger. The gentleman is kind and rich we know, but we are not certain that he is a servant of God, that he will care for the soul of our dear boy. Evan may become rich, but what will it profit him to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? He is an orphan, the Lord has confided him to our care, if through our neglect he should fall into sin, shall we not be answerable to God ?"

Susan, however, thought that Martha had already instilled

such good principles into the boy, that sheltered, as he must be, in a gentleman's family, there could not be much danger of his getting into folly and dissipation ; and as she was the one who clothed Evan, and gave him lodging, Martha thought she had no right to refuse her consent to what Susan considered so advantageous for the boy.

The separation was very painful to Martha. When the hour for parting arrived, she locked the cottage-door, and making the boy kneel with her, she prayed that the Lord would write on his heart all the lessons she had taught him from Holy Scripture ; that he would guard and preserve him in every hour of temptation and danger, and that whatever trials he might experience in this world, he might be hereafter a partaker in the glory which shall be revealed.

Evan wept at leaving his two mothers, and for the two days of the journey seemed melancholy and silent, but the novelty and bustle of a town life soon brought back the gaiety natural to his years, and he ceased to regret the cottage and the hills, though he always thought with warm affection of his maternal friends. He was employed in various little services in the house, and his master gave him a groom's coat and a gold-laced hat to wear, as he stood behind his cabriolet ; and Evan considered himself a great man when thus attending his master. In the evening he went for a couple of hours to an English master in the neighbourhood to learn to read and write, and his wish to learn rendered him so attentive, that he made great progress, and soon conquered the difficulties.

His present companions were very different from Martha and Susan ; their conversation often very unfit for a boy of his age, and their example by no means improving. Evan gradually became assimilated to them, outwardly at least ; for whilst a casual observer would have pronounced him particularly gay and happy, he was often ashamed of his own thoughts and words, and sometimes longed for the happiness he had enjoyed attending the cows at pasture. He shunned such recollections, however, and thus his regrets, though sincere, never led him to repentance and prayer. Evan feared the mockery of his companions, and yielded to their invitations instead of avoiding their evil courses. In a very few years Evan had so far deadened his conscience that he could, without remorse, do what at first had been contrary to every principle within him.

His master, for the first two years, only took him out with his carriage during the day, but gradually Evan became his

attendant when he went to evening entertainments, and was kept waiting in the streets with coachmen and footmen, or in the hall, until past midnight, and thus he had met some of his worst associates. One winter's night as he thus waited, some dispute arose amongst the servants who surrounded him. Evan paid no attention to what they were saying, and did not even know what the dispute was about. The weather was excessively cold, and he had already adopted the custom of taking a glass of spirits on such occasions. He entered a public-house at the corner of the street for the purpose of doing so now, and meeting some acquaintances there, he was induced to take more than he at first intended, and became heated and excited, and when he came out, he took part in the affray going on in the street, though still ignorant of what the dispute originated in. One hot word led to another, and blows soon succeeded to words, and Evan received such a blow in the chest that he fell backwards, and his head coming against the pavement with violence, he lay senseless on the ground. He remained so long in this state that they feared he was dead. His master, who had been called out of the house, had him carried to a hospital, where he was put to bed and bled, and he came to his senses.

The wound on his head proved very dangerous, and several bruises on other parts of his body caused much suffering. His master did all in his power for his comfort, and he met with every care and attention in the hospital, but he was surrounded by strangers, and no one cared for his mind, which was as much pained as his body, and required comfort and repose fully as much. For many days he lay silent and sad, his thoughts so vague and confused that he could scarcely be said to be meditating or reflecting on anything. Gradually, however, the cloudiness cleared, and his recollection of what he had learned in childhood recurred to his mind with force and distinctness. He now knew and felt his sinfulness, not merely the sinfulness of the years he had spent in service in London, but evidently, the Holy Spirit having touched his heart, and cleared his perception of spiritual things, he felt that he had been a sinner all his life; that he never had loved God or Christ, and that any good that he had ever done had been from love to Martha. The Lord, however, in showing him the sin of his heart, showed him the willingness of the Saviour to save those who come to God through him. His thoughts now reverted to the cottage, and Martha sitting in her straw chair, looking at him with kindness and love as he repeated the texts,

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." We are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "For by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Evan felt as if he were again a child, and he wept like a child, whilst as a child he prayed to his heavenly Father, and, after the example of the prodigal son, besought the Lord to look upon him while he was still far off, and unworthy to come nearer. As he gradually became calmer he tried to recall to memory every passage of Scripture which Martha had taught him, and he thanked God for having given him such a friend. She had not had means to give him food or raiment, but he now felt how much better than earthly riches were the lessons she had implanted in his mind: what other comfort had he now on the borders of the grave?

Evan, however, recovered. It was several months before he could leave the hospital, and when he did so, it was with the firm determination to leave London, and return to Wales. His master had several times visited him, but Evan waited the recovery of health and strength before he told him of his resolve to leave his service. His master, who really valued him, tried to dissuade him from doing so, offering to make him his valet, by which he would be sheltered from going out at night, and would have much higher wages. "Oh, dear sir," said the young man, "suffer me to go, I know it will be best for me. London offers too many temptations to one so weak as I am. More experienced, stronger-minded Christians would overcome them, but I am weak, very weak-minded, and weak in faith; I must fly the danger which I cannot avoid here. At home, amidst the mountains, I shall not have the same fine clothes, the same good dinners, but I shall have enough, and I shall be more sheltered from temptations which I cannot resist. My kind friends will gladly receive me, and I am young and strong, and, thanks to your kindness in having me taught, I shall be able to do much to help them in their old age."

His master could not contradict what Evan said, and seemed touched by his penitence and earnestness. "You are right," he said, "I recollect old Martha's fears for you; she feared that you would fall into sin, that you would be unfaithful to God. You have done as she feared, but you return to her, more attached to her and to the truth than when you left her. I have not been a good master to you, nor to any of my servants, but I will in future try to be better. I wish our parting to be profitable to us both, and I give you this Bible

As a beginning of better things on my part. I have had you taught to read, and am bound to give you **THE BOOK** to read. You will have pleasure in reading to your old friend the passages she taught you in childhood ;” and while saying this his master took down from the book-shelves a very neat Bible. He also gave him a few pounds to set him up in some way, when he should have returned to his home.

Evan travelled as fast as he could, and was received with joy by Martha and Susan. He rented a little garden, which he cultivated carefully ; and its produce enabled him to provide comforts for those to whom he owed so much. “ Let me sit beside you and read the gospel to you every evening, and then we can pray together, and thank God for all his goodness to us,” he said to old Martha the first evening of his return.

“ Yes, my boy,” she answered, “ we will thank him for having taught you to renounce ungodliness and worldly lusts, and we will ask him to teach us to ‘ live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.’ ”

E. M. P.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

AMONG the works of God in creation, one of the most important and valuable to living beings is light. It reveals the beauties of nature, and diffuses cheerfulness and joy throughout the whole earth. The influence of the sun, the chief source of light to our globe, gives life to plants, and fertilizes the soil ; and causes fruitfulness and plenty for the sustenance and comfort of man and beast. Could the world exist without light, how comfortless, dreary, yea, wretched would be the state of man ! His existence would be like a living death, existing in unmitigated and perpetual darkness ; it would be like living in a grave—dead while he lived.

To such a state of things the condition of the sinner, unenlightened and unregenerated by grace, may in some respects be compared. He is sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. He is spiritually not only blind, but dead whilst he lives, dead in trespasses and sins, Ephes. ii. 1 ; Col. ii. 13 ; a stranger to all spiritual joys and comforts. A blind man, though deprived of many enjoyments because he sees not, has, nevertheless, many comforts and pleasures in the world ; but the soul, whilst in an unregenerate state, is altogether without spiritual enjoyments. Blessed be God, man is not left without a remedy

for this evil. There is a light which can shine into his soul ; and convert darkness into light, and death into life. Christ is that light ; " the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," John i. 9. He is the " Sun of righteousness" which was to " arise with healing in his wings," as declared by the prophet Malachi (iv. 2). " The day spring from on high" which " hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death," Luke i. 78, 79. He said, " I am the light of the world : he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," John viii. 12.

Christ is the light which God himself hath set up and given to the world for the spiritual illumination of the souls of men. In a description of the Messiah given in Isaiah, we have these words, " I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles," Isa. xlii. 6. And in another place, " It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel : I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth," Isa. xlix. 6. Matthew applies the following prophecy to Christ, " The people which sat in darkness saw great light ; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up," Matt. iv. 16 ; Isa. ix. 1, 2.

The light which Christ imparts is the light of life. " In him was life ; and the life was the light of men," John i. 4. Jesus could therefore say, " The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself ; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," John v. 25, 26.

Christ imparts the light of life by giving divine and saving knowledge to the ignorant. He opens the blind eyes of the sinner's soul, he enlightens his understanding, that he may know " what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," Ephes. i. 18. Men are naturally in darkness : they know not God, they know not themselves, they know not the way of life. That which they know not Christ teaches them. For he is the teacher sent from God, the prophet raised by the Lord, to reveal and make known the will of the Most High, and to teach men the way of salvation : see John iii. 2 ; Deut. xviii. 15 ; Acts iii. 22 ; vii. 37.

He imparts the light of life by granting the forgiveness of

sins. A state of guilt and condemnation is a state of darkness and death. Jesus died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and those who through grace receive him as the light of the world, the Saviour of men, receive the remission of sins. He thereby brings joy and consolation to the soul. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Then how pleasant and sweet is it for the soul to behold the light of life, and to feel the reviving, refreshing, and invigorating influences of the Sun of righteousness, when God for Christ's sake pardons and absolves us from our manifold sins and transgressions. when we can say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," *Psa. xxvii. 1.* "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," *Rom. v. 1.*

Christ gives the light of life by implanting the life of God in the soul. This is passing from darkness to light, from death to life: see *1 Pet. ii. 9*; *John v. 24*; *1 John iii. 14.* When the heart is renewed by grace, the soul is alive to God. The change effected is called "regeneration," and "being born again," *Tit. iii. 5*; *John iii. 3*; because by it the soul begins a new life, a life of devotedness to God, a life of holiness: see *1 Pet. i. 15*; *2 Tim. i. 9.* The world, which had been the chief object of the aim, desire, and love of the soul, is forsaken and cast behind; and God becomes the great object on which the heart is fixed. Natural appetites and passions, and the customs of the world, cease to be, as they were before, the guides and laws of our actions; and the will of God becomes the rule which governs the soul. The life of God in the soul is the germ of eternal life. Those who possess it have a title to eternal life, and are acquiring a fitness for its enjoyment. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life," *1 John v. 11, 12.*

The true light and the light of life is made manifest *by the gospel.* He has saved and called his people with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, *2 Tim. i. 9, 10.* Regardless of human systems and human opinions, we should receive the light as set forth in the gospel, as bringing to us knowledge, salvation, and eternal life. It is to be received by faith. Christ says, "I am come a light into

the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness," John xii. 46. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John iii. 16-18. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light," John xii. 36. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," John vi. 47. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36.

The faith which Christ requires of us, that we may realize salvation, and finally obtain eternal life, is simple, truthful trust and confidence in him as our Saviour: see Ephes. i. 12, 13.

We see, then, that the blessed Jesus, the true light, the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him, the giver of light and life to them that believe, is set forth in the gospel, that we may be made partakers of these blessings through him. An important question suggests itself on the subject. Have all men the light of life, which he came into the world, suffered, died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God to impart? Alas! many are in darkness, though they are surrounded by the light of Divine truth and salvation. They are like the blind sitting in the face of the noon-day sun. There is light, but their eyes are closed that they see it not. They are in death, though life has been manifested, 1 John i. 2; and freely offered to them: see Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xxii. 17; John vii. 37.

Why is it so? Christ himself gives the answer to this question: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil: for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved," John iii. 19.—"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," John v. 40.

Those, then, who receive not the light of life are guilty of a positive rejection of the light. It may not be an acknowledged rejection of it; but it is not on that account the less positive. It may be as to form only neglect of, or indifference

to, the light; but the guilt is not the less on that account. Men are often too indolent to examine the Saviour's claim upon them, and to consider the blessedness of receiving him, and the misery of neglecting and rejecting him; and that indolence, of which they think so little, is sinking them lower and lower in guilt, and adding daily to the weight of condemnation and misery which await them in eternity. How great is the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved! How soon are they brought under the influence of strong delusion that they should believe a lie! And what is the awful consequence of such conduct? Listen to it in the strong but correct language of St. Paul, "That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 10-12.

Those who reject the light of life do so because they love sin. They will not give up their evil deeds for salvation. They will not exchange the practice of sin for the Saviour. They would rather have sin at the risk of condemnation than Christ and salvation with holiness. Yes, that is the case: these respectively go together. He that chooses the one, consequently chooses the other also. You cannot separate sin from damnation; neither can you separate Christ and his salvation from holiness, as it is written, "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 22, 23.

There is often the special sin of pride also in the rejection of the light of life. Sinners will not come to the light lest their deeds should be reprov'd. Bring a sinner's life and a sinner's heart to the light of Christ, to the light of his holy gospel, and to the light of his heavenly character; and what a picture do we behold! Look at the purity of Christ and his gospel; and then look at the sinner in the mire and filth of his iniquity. Look at the life of Christ, of him who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his lips; and look at the mind also that was in him. We behold in him the perfection of holiness and heavenly excellence. But what do we see when we contemplate the sinner's heart and life? Moral deformity and corruption! An object most loathsome and hateful! To look on such a scene, to contemplate such a contrast, would humble the sinner. He cannot endure such a manifestation. The prospect would lead him to hate and despise his own character.

His pride throws a veil over his mind, that he may not see the purity, beauty, and perfection that would make him appear so vile in his own eyes. He therefore abides in unbelief. He will not come to Christ, that he may have life; consequently he abides in death.

Reader, if you are one of those who have hitherto rejected the light of life, do so no longer. Believe with the heart unto righteousness in that glorious Saviour, that blessed Jesus, who, having accomplished the work of redemption on earth, is exalted at the right hand of the Father, to give repentance and remission of sins; and he will cause light to shine in your dark mind; he will diffuse, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, life into your dead soul; and guide your feet into the way of peace, which leads to glory and to God.

J. C.

THE LOST EDEN.

I HAD not been long installed as pastor to my new congregation when I was particularly interested by one member of it. She was a widow lady, advanced in life, with gentle and pleasing manners; but it was evident from her appearance, that she had suffered much, either in mind or body, or perhaps both. In her little history there was nothing remarkable. She had always lived in a village, about six miles distant from that where she now resided, and had been the wife of a most amiable man, to whom she was tenderly attached, but who had been taken from her after a short illness. This bereavement was felt the more as she had no children, and her naturally strong affections were concentrated on this one object. Immediately after the death of her husband, Mrs. L— left the home where she had been so happy, and never revisited it, though she had settled so near it. She lived in great retirement, and was spoken of as a religious woman, though from the fixed melancholy expressed in her countenance, it was to be feared she experienced little of the consolation, the joy and peace in believing, which the Christian faith is so well calculated to supply.

I seldom looked at this afflicted lady without remembering the prophet's words, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Jer. viii. 22. And I felt not only that it was my duty, but that it would be my great pleasure, to be the means of leading the mourner to cast herself and all

her sorrows unreservedly upon that Saviour, whose office it is to heal the broken in heart, and bind up their wounds, *Psa. cxlvii. 3.* Either from natural reserve, or perhaps from some feeling that the deep grief which she cherished could not be understood or sympathized in, *Mrs. L—* was seldom known to refer to it. Although she conversed with me affably upon indifferent subjects, it was so long before I could lead her to anything like a confidential exchange of thoughts in matters connected with religion, that I almost despaired of ever being able to do so; when a slight chance, as we are apt to call such occurrences, effected it.

One fine day in spring, being on my return from a walk to visit some members of my flock who lived at a distance from my residence, when crossing a park where everything around was arrayed in the bright garb of that joyous season, I met *Mrs. L—*. Her look and manner were more cheerful than usual, and I thought of what Thomson calls

The infusive force of Spring on man,
When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being and serene his soul.

We spoke for awhile on the beauty of the season; and, glad to find that she took some interest in the subject, I said, "I wish, *Mrs. L—*, you could see the fine prospect which I have just been admiring from the top of the hill. I had not seen it except when 'the icy touch of unprolific winter' had impressed what our Christian poet calls 'a cold stagnation' on every object; but now that the whole landscape is teeming with renewed life, the sight of it cannot, I think, fail to fill the heart with gladness, and lead us to say with the psalmist, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all;' and, perhaps, to imbue our souls with somewhat of the spirit in which he cried, 'Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely,' *Psa. cxlvii. 1.* Let me return and go with you to the hill-top; the ascent is easy, and you will find it renovating to your spirits." She agreed, adding with a melancholy smile, "But as for renovating my spirits, you forget that

It is content of heart
Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart
Enlivens all it sees."

Having gained the summit of the eminence, I endeavoured to point out the various beauties of the landscape that lay before us at the other side, but my companion did not seem to

hear me. She stood with her eyes fixed upon one spot at some distance, where I perceived what appeared to be a village encircled by trees, above which rose the spire of a church. Tears trickled down Mrs. L—'s cheek as she looked; and after awhile I said to her, "That, I doubt not, is the place where you formerly resided?" "Yes," she replied, "it is the place where I spent all my happy days. I sometimes come to this very spot for the purpose of taking a distant view of it; and do you know, Mr. —, that on such occasions I think my feelings must be very like those which Adam felt after his expulsion from Paradise, if ever he contemplated that home of unalloyed bliss at a distance."

"We are apt," I replied, "to consider the grief of our progenitor on that occasion, as he 'heart struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood'* to have been almost unmitigated; but to me it seems far otherwise."

"How can that be?" she asked. "He had lost all earthly happiness, and that through his own sin."

"True, he was a condemned criminal before his God, and must deeply have felt that his punishment was not greater than he deserved. Yet I would not hesitate to say that Adam, humbled to the dust, and utterly divested of all self-righteousness, in leaving Paradise with his coat of skins, the pledges of redeeming grace, upon his shoulder, carried with him a richer happiness than he had ever known among the lovely scenes of Eden, with all its fruits and flowers."

"I would again ask how can that be?" said Mrs. L—.

"Thus, dear friend," I replied. "Nothing secures the happiness of the creature so much as a knowledge of God's character, especially of his attributes of mercy and goodness. Adam must, indeed, have been bowed down to the earth under a sense of penitential sorrow when he saw Eden defiled, and the rest which his Maker had prepared for him forfeited. But let us endeavour to form some idea of what his feelings were when he learned how all this, so deeply to be deplored, was made to operate by the wonderful grace of God; when he understood that 'where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,' Rom. v. 20. He got the promise of the woman's Seed, as unlooked for as undeserved; and, oh! how his bosom must have glowed with gratitude at such a proof of Divine love! What consolation must have visited his stricken soul, when through the long vista of 'ages to come' the light of truth enabled him to perceive that, fallen as all were in him, (Rom.

* Milton.

v. 12,) still God 'might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus,' Eph. ii. 7. When without care, and without clothing, Adam wandered through the beauteous bowers of Paradise, his nakedness expressed his innocency, or unconsciousness of evil, but it expressed his exposure or liability also; for being only a creature, he was open to the assaults of the enemy. He then stood before his Maker in his own righteousness; but when he lost it, and was clothed by the hand of God himself, can we doubt that he had some discernment of the blessed fact, that the naked guilty soul would be clad in the righteousness of the great sacrifice which was to be offered up for the sins of the world? Did he not rejoice to know that when the redeemed reach the house of God, there will be no more nakedness nor exposure, but clothing and security? See 2 Cor. v. 1-3. Conceive, dear friend, what a view of God's goodness all this must have given to the mind of the ruined sinner, and what corresponding feelings of affection and deep gratitude it must have awakened in his heart; and then tell me in what manner would he be likely to pass the remainder of his sojourn below. Would he spend it, do you think, in vain regret for the earthly joys he had lost—in looking wishfully towards the Eden where he had possessed them? No; with his affections set upon things above, his anxious endeavour would be to find out and do the will of that Being who had shown him such unspeakable mercy, such wonderful love; and to learn more and more of his character, as revealed in creation, and in his promised work of redemption, a knowledge of which furnishes the true, the only element of enduring happiness to the creature."

After remaining silent for some time she exclaimed, "You are right, sir. It was indeed a wonderful display of mercy and love; and Adam, if he felt it as he ought, could no longer look back to Eden with regret, but onward to heaven with hope and joy; and surely, as you say, he would try to prove his gratitude by doing the will of God. Kind friend," she continued with emotion, "I can apply your remarks as you intended them; they convict me of great sin. Yes, I have been selfishly brooding over the sorrow which God sent, doubtless for the purpose of turning my thoughts and affections heavenward, and making that sorrow an excuse for idleness when I could have done some little work in my Master's vineyard. Never did God's love and man's ingratitude so strike me before. Well might the apostle say, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son

to be the propitiation for our sins,' 1 John iv. 10. Oh that I could henceforth prove, by my life and conversation, that I entertained a due sense of it!"

"You can do all things through Christ strengthening you," I replied, "and he has promised the help of his Holy Spirit to those who ask it."

"Then may he help me," she said, "that I no longer sit looking towards my lost Eden of earthly joy—joy with which I have done for ever—but that, 'forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,' " Phil. iii. 13, 14.

From the time of this conversation a great change took place in Mrs. L—. She became an active agent in promoting the welfare of her fellow-creatures in every way that was in her power. My wife found her an efficient assistant in executing all her plans for doing good, and as a sabbath-school teacher I have seldom met her equal. She never forgot her sorrow, but it was now sanctified, so that she could say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes."

E. F. G.

UNCLE BENJAMIN'S WALK.

ONE rainy morning two young people stood at the window of their breakfast-room which overlooked the street, making comments very freely upon the pedestrians who, with and without umbrellas, macintoshes, and goloshes, were hastily splashing along, or carefully picking their way through the mud. It is, perhaps, not improbable that a wet day is more favourable to the exhibition of character than a fine one, for it is very trying to play at heroes and heroines with locked umbrellas in a crowd, to stop half way across a puddle intended to be cleared at a bound, to rush against the paste brush of a bill-sticker, in a vain endeavour to escape the ruthless splash of omnibus wheels, or to receive on the top of one's bonnet or hat a steady succession of large dirty drops from the eaves of a building, while a string of determined weatherproof individuals rush by, without allowing one a peaceful interval to obey the police and "move on." It is only the native good temper, or the positive duck whose garment cannot be spoiled, that can preserve anything like a placid countenance under such circumstances. Wrinkles and puckers are in remarkable development, and short angry mutterings disguise the voices that are gentle and bland when the sun shines.

"Uncle Benjamin," cried one of the young observers at the window, "do listen to this. Here is Charles pretending to tell people's characters by the way they walk in the rain!"

The individual addressed was a benevolent-looking old gentleman, who might, without any detriment to the real owner of that respected name, have sat for a picture of everybody's friend "Old Humphrey."

"Now look at this little man coming puffing along, Lizzy," continued Charles, "his umbrella is a perfect character in itself, it is one of the ancient aristocracy of umbrellas, none of your upstart alpacas, but a genuine blue cotton with a stump that has seen service, and a handle which it does one good to grasp; see how it shelters its master's head and shoulders without any veering about in the wind, or minding whose eyes it comes near. It is an umbrella that knows its business, and does it; and where could it learn such a lesson but from its steady matter-of-fact owner, whose business it is to get on in the world? There! he went straight through that mud, his boots are waterproof; he nearly upset that little child,—what business had it in his way?"

"Now, Charles, you don't know whether he is sorry or not, for walking over the child. Do please to reprove this conceit, uncle Benjamin. I am sure I should not like to be judged by my walk, especially on a wet day, when one is obliged to take so much care of one's self."

"That's the thing, Lizzy. You see the real self peeps out whether you will or no. The varnish of politeness and elegance won't stand a wet day, depend upon it. Now, observe this lady, she looks as if no one has any right to a clean place on the pavement but herself, and as if the elements had made an immense mistake to produce rain when she has to walk out."

"For shame, brother, you are quite censorious, but I will know what uncle Ben thinks about people's walk."

"I think, my dear, there is something in it," said uncle Ben quietly; and laying down the newspaper he advanced to the window.

"In what, uncle?"

"In the walk. I have some idea that much may be known of a man by his walk. I always notice that, however, much more than his talk."

"Did you ever notice how we walk, uncle? I had no idea that you would humour Charles's whim."

"Why, you, my dear, have rather a giddy, careless sort of a walk, and I often fear that you will fall and hurt yourself. As

for Charles, he steps firmly enough, but he does not look at the directions that are put up almost before his eyes, and may find himself in the wrong road."

"Well, I did not suppose, uncle, that you ever took notice of such things, or saw characters in blue cotton umbrellas. So I am giddy, and Charles is stupid."

"Not literally stupid, for, no doubt, he thinks he has all the information necessary for the way he intends to go."

"Conceited then—wise in his own eyes, and that is worse. Oh, Charles, there must be something in it," said Lizzy, looking archly at her brother.

"It is safest to secure a companion, Lizzy," replied uncle Benjamin, "and then you will not be likely to fall, nor lose your way. But your companion, of course, must possess a strong arm and a wise head. The rain does not seem likely to abate, so I must even go through it; good bye for the present. Perhaps I may see you again in the evening."

"Now, uncle, I shall particularly observe your walk, umbrella and all, and in the evening I shall treat you to my deductions therefrom."

"Very well, my dear niece. Be generous, and make all due allowance for an old man," said the old gentleman, as he went out.

"I will tell you what may be gathered from uncle Benjamin's walk," said the mother of the young people, looking up from the desk at which she appeared to be writing, while an attentive listener to the conversation that had been going on. "All who know him may see that he has the companionship he recommended to you; that he leans upon the strong arm, and is guided by the wise head, for, like Enoch, he walks with God; and not by the movement of the body, but by the practice of the life, he estimates character."

"No doubt that was what he meant, Charles," cried Lizzy, "for we never heard uncle Benjamin make quizzical comments upon anybody, and what he said about me was perfectly true. It is a very odd thing, that though he tells me of my faults more freely than any one does, I cannot be angry with him, but am grieved that I do not please him better."

"It is," said Charles, "because we know that uncle Ben is sincere. There is no possibility of daring to doubt that he is what he seems, and means what he says. If all professedly religious people were like him, I should never speak disrespectfully of any of them again. There is no varnish there, it is the real thing, and will stand a rainy day."

"Well, uncle," said Lizzy in the evening, when her uncle

was comfortably settled in the arm-chair, "we took particular notice of your walk, and have settled some remarkable points about you."

"Indeed, my dear! I hope they are not very bad points, then, if so easily discerned."

"Will you tell us how you manage it, uncle, for our imitation, for we know and feel that, as mamma says, you walk with God."

"My dear Lizzy, you rejoice my heart, if indeed you desire to know something of such companionship. And Charles?" he added inquiringly.

"I would go the right road, dear sir, and am always ready to listen to your instruction, because I believe you are in it yourself."

"By the grace of God I found it, dear children, and it has been to me a way of pleasantness and a path of peace. But I can only repeat the oft-told tale of the love of God in Jesus Christ. Before a man can 'walk with God,' he must come to God, not geographically, for in that sense he is not far from every one of us, but morally; and Jesus is 'the Way' across the gulf which divides a fallen sinner from a holy God, and in him we have access by the Spirit to the Father. In the forgiveness of our sins, love is kindled within the grateful heart, and when affection guides the steps, we keep close where we truly love. Love secures obedience, and the obedient child walks fearlessly, trustfully, happily, by a dear Father's side. Only God sees the state of the heart, but man has a right to form some opinion of it from the tenor of the life: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' And that was my meaning in adopting Charles's word this morning about the walk. A man may have 'all knowledge,' and talk beautifully about heaven and God; but if he does not love, he cannot obey God, nor walk with God in congenial companionship. And there are those who walk by a very different rule, who are 'enemies of the cross of Christ,' 'who mind earthly things,' and 'whose end is destruction.' Those are solemn words, my children. But I look for better things for you, and things that accompany salvation. Ask Him who hears and answers the feeblest cry to 'hold up your goings in his path,' to guide your feet in the way of peace; and the child who studies the Father's word, consults with him about the difficulties, the temptations, the hopes, the fears, the everything that concerns his interests both for time and eternity, will rarely go astray, but will walk with him straight into the gates of the celestial city. This, my dear nephew, is the 'real thing,' as you call it, which shows even better on a rainy day than in the brightest sunshine: this

gets behind selfishness, and upsets it ; this soothes the temper, kindles all kindly sympathies, and prevents us from living to ourselves, and fancying that only we have a right to the clean pavement. You might, however, have been too severe this morning, Charles ; it is better to turn our observations to our own profit, and remember the charity that is ' kind,' ' hopeth all things,' and ' thinketh no evil.' "

B. T.

LOVE IN SMALL THINGS.

As I walked, on a bright spring day, along one of the avenues of the Green Park, in London, admiring the bright gravel walks, the verdant foliage, the silver-barked stem and elegant branches of the birch trees, and observed the company, I saw two very little girls, one indeed was but a babe, neatly and genteelly dressed in light blue plaid frocks, moving on before me, jumping and laughing in the very joy of their hearts. By accident the lesser of the two fell, when the other, a mite of a creature, assuming all the protecting kindness of a mamma, lifted up her fallen sister, wiped away tenderly the bits of gravel which stuck to her tiny hands, and kissed her and comforted her till her face was lit up with a smile.

The wiping of the hands of that little lovely one was a pretty picture, and I could not help thinking it was a deed somewhat akin to that of the woman mentioned in the Scriptures, when she washed the feet of the Redeemer with her tears, and wiped them with her hair, for both actions sprang from kindness, and both were performed in love.

I do like to see instances of love in small things, for they are the germs and the bud of what shall blossom and bring forth the fruit of kindly deeds in after years. Go on, my little maidens, not only along the gravel walk of the Green Park, but through the thorny paths of life also, with your hands and your hearts united. And may He who said, " Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," be evermore your Guide, your Guard, and your Comforter !

G. M.

THE LORD WILL MAKE IT UP.

LET your exertions for the cause of God be according to the benefit you have received. " God loveth a cheerful giver."

There were a good man and his wife in Hampshire ; they were in humble circumstances, but they felt their obligations to Divine grace, and gave a helping hand to the plans which were formed for the conversion of sinners. At last the man

began to reason with his wife that they were going behind hand, and must do less. She still urged that while so many were perishing around them they should not relax, saying that they must trust to the Lord, who could make it up to them in a way they least expected; and they still kept on doing good, and the Lord did appear for them in a way they least expected.

They had a profligate son who had for years been the grief of their hearts, and had impoverished their substance by draining them of all the money he could procure from them. Shortly after the circumstance to which I have adverted, a letter came from this son; the mother opened it. Her heart yearned over her son, though he had well nigh broken it. The letter was too much for her; she laid it aside till her husband returned from labour, and then she told him, "Here is a letter from our son." "Oh," said he, "do not give it me; I suppose it is only asking for more money to consume upon his sins." However on her intreating, he took it and began to read it; and soon the big drops rolled down his cheeks, when he found it filled with professions of penitence for his sins; for the word of God had come with power to his soul, and he had become a new creature; and he now declared that it would be his endeavour to study their happiness, and as long as he had hands to work, to contribute to their support during the remainder of their lives.

Rev. Wm. Jay.

TRACT ANECDOTE.

"CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS."

SOME years ago a young lady, resident in the north of England, whilst on a visit to a friend in a neighbouring county, had her attention drawn to a little book which had been recently published by the Religious Tract Society. It was "James's Anxious Inquirer." She had but a little while before found the way of salvation, and was still in a state of mind which rendered such a work exceedingly welcome. She read it with interest and advantage, not without a feeling of regret that she had not met with it during her struggles and inquiries after peace with God. She thought that if she had done so, its clear and simple statements of the method of Divine mercy would have removed many doubts, and have enabled her the more readily to receive the truth as it is in Jesus.

Herself the child of eminently pious Christian parents, she was the fourth of their family who had made an early profession of the name of Christ. But there remained two of that family—its youngest members, who, although there was much

about them that was pleasing and hopeful, gave as yet no evidence of decision for God. The thought immediately struck her, "This is just the book for my sisters." She procured a copy, and on her return home presented it to them, not without prayer that it might, by the Divine blessing, prove the means of their conversion. They received the present with gratitude, appreciating it as a mark of sisterly attention and kindness, but for a long time it was left unread. She had almost given up hope that it would be of any service to them, when, nearly a year after, the younger of the two sisters being confined to her chamber by slight indisposition, remembered the book, asked for it, and read it. Its faithful and earnest appeals carried conviction to her heart, and its lucid exposition of the gospel showed her at once the way of peace; thus, before many days had passed, she was a sincere believer in the Lord Jesus, and rejoiced in the consciousness that she was indeed a child of God.

She was unwilling to enjoy her gladness alone, and whilst still confined to her apartment, sent for the other sister, for whom the book had been procured—told her what she had experienced—urged her to read it—read it with her; and by and by she, too, fled for refuge to the cross. On the same evening, shortly after, those two sisters were received into the fellowship of the church of Christ, and have ever since maintained an honourable and consistent profession of the gospel. To this day they testify, that whilst deeply indebted to the counsels and example of their beloved parents, and to the instructions of their excellent pastor, they owe their conversion to the reading of the "Anxious Inquirer," which their sister gave to them.

There came, some little time afterwards, as apprentice to their father, a youth from the country. He was an inmate of the family. Though there was nothing about him that was positively vicious, he himself declared afterwards that his heart was filled with bitter enmity to the gospel, that up to the time of which we are about to speak, instead of being subdued, it had gradually increased; and that if there were one thing more than another which he would have deemed out of all question, it would have been his conversion. It happened, however, that trying some experiments one day with a dangerous explosive compound, the whole blew up, scorching his face most terribly, and for a length of time entirely depriving him of sight. The young lady who has been already mentioned, whilst deeply compassionating his sufferings, thought that this

was an opportunity of promoting his best interests, which should not be neglected. For some days it was necessary that he should be in a darkened room and quiet, so that he was left to his own reflections. At length she went to him, bearing in her hand the identical copy of the "Anxious Inquirer" which she had presented to her sisters, and asked him if he would like her to read it to him. He consented. She read the greater part, if not the whole of the book, interspersing its reading with occasional remarks and explanations. He heard with deep attention; his mind was filled with alarm, for he saw himself to be a sinner, justly exposed to the wrath of God, but encouraged by the exhibition of the truth contained in the book; he caught a glimpse of hope, and after many conflicts, emerged into the light and liberty of the gospel. The writer was well acquainted with him, both before and after his conversion, and he can truly say, a more complete and delightful change he never witnessed. Some little time after he became the victim of consumption, and was compelled to return to his home. There the writer visited him, and found him, though anticipating an early death, still calm and glad, and bearing a powerful testimony in the manner in which he was sustained in that trying hour, to the truth and value of the gospel. One thing he well remembers, and that is, the grateful manner in which the dying youth traced the peace and happiness which he then enjoyed to the reading of the "Anxious Inquirer" during his temporary blindness.

Though these interesting facts would be worthy of narration were it only for the sake of affording another testimony to the value of the work, which in the three cases which have been mentioned was so signally blessed, we mention them rather for the purpose of suggesting a few thoughts on the subject of Christian effort.

It will be observed that the parties whose benefit was sought were members of the lady's own household. It often happens that Christians, really anxious to do all the good in their power, seek the sphere of their usefulness almost entirely beyond the limits of the family to which they belong. They teach in the sabbath-school, bear from house to house the religious tract, and visit the sick and the dying; yet all the while make no direct effort to save the souls of those who are nearly related to them. This is scarcely the right order. The circle which is nearest us is that of our own family, and we are there to seek first of all to exert our influence. The Gadarene demoniac, when restored by the power of Christ, was com

manded to "return to his own house," and there to "show how great things God had done for him." The converted member of the family, whoever he be, is set as a light to all in the household, who are still in darkness, and it should be his first care to lead them to the cross. It happens sometimes, in the providence of God, that a youth is introduced as apprentice or servant into a family, where there happens to be one or more of such professors of the gospel. Our servants are brought within the range of our influence by the providence of God, that we may seek their salvation. It is a sad thing for one of that class to have to say, on leaving a Christian family, "Not one of them ever spoke to me one word, or did a single thing, for the obvious and special purpose of drawing my attention to the care of my soul." And yet how very many could say that with perfect truth!

There are various methods of usefulness. We may have the opportunity in some cases of communicating oral instruction, and it may be thankfully received. The "word in season" may be dropped, as the occasion arises, when it may be spoken with a likelihood of its being of service. But there are cases in which no such opportunity occurs, or in which the ability for such endeavours is wanting. Then the little book judiciously chosen, and presented or placed in the way of those we seek to benefit, may be of incalculable service. The instances above narrated are but a few of thousands in which the printed page has been the means of calling attention to the great realities of eternity, and of saving the soul.

Opportunities frequently arise in which the mind is especially open to impression of which we should sedulously avail ourselves. In one of the instances we have mentioned, it was in sickness that the book was remembered and asked for, and in the last it was when the youth had been laid aside by the accident which had befallen him, that his mind was found prepared to receive the instructions from which, at another time, he would have carelessly or contemptuously turned away. How many, for want of some kind and Christian friend to address to them the counsels for which they were prepared by sickness or calamity, have gradually forgotten their serious impressions, and have come forth from the trial unsubdued and unchanged! We are not to wait for such opportunities, and do nothing till they come; but when they do come, we should never permit them to pass without making some special effort for the salvation of those whom God himself has prepared in the arrangement of his providence to receive his truth.

We are sometimes disposed, because we do not see the fruit of our labours, to abstain from effort. A Christian lady said to the writer lately, respecting some tracts which she was in the habit of receiving, "I used to send them to my friends, but I have become discouraged, and have not sent them lately, because I never heard of any good that was done by any which I sent." It was replied that our knowledge of success was not to be the rule of effort; that this was a method of usefulness which, perhaps, more than most others, was a work of faith, a casting of our bread on the waters; that there had been most signal instances of good which had thus been done; that there was every reason to believe that the great day of account would reveal the beneficial issues of many efforts which we have deemed abortive; and that further, if what we did was not honoured to be the means of actual conversion, it might be part of a series of influences by which some mind would be prepared for a last and powerful appeal which might, by God's blessing, issue in its conversion. The manner in which the Divine promises have been fulfilled may afford us abundant encouragement in our work and labour of love, and inspire us with the hope that "in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." S. G.

THE EMIGRANT'S PRAYER.

O, Jesus Saviour! when we part,
 Obedient to thy will,
 From friends and home with sinking heart,
 Do thou be near us still!

Go with us, Lord, our vessel guide
 Across the pathless sea;
 And grant, whate'er we leave beside,
 We never part from thee.

O, go with us! appoint our lot,
 And lead us on our way—
 Companion in the loneliest spot,
 Light in the darkest day.

Go with us, Lord, our labour bless,
 Our "basket and our store!"
 And o'er the distant wilderness
 The streams of mercy pour.

If clothed, and fed, and sheltered there,
 We rich abundance find,
 Oh, let us not withhold a share
 From those we leave behind,

And grant, whene'er our wanderings cease,
 Where'er our home we raise,
 That home may be a home of peace,
 A home of prayer and praise.



IF YOU KNEW ALL.

BY OLD HUMPHREY.

"WHAT a noble tree!" said I to a farmer, who was one day taking me over his grounds, when to my surprise he broke into a loud laugh, saying, "If you knew all you would hardly say so." In this he was quite right, for when we came up to the tree, and I went behind it, I found it to be quite hollow.

Many reasons may be assigned for the infirmity of human judgment. We are influenced by pride, blinded by passions, and warped by self-interest; but one of the principal reasons is this, that we rarely have before us the whole of the necessary evidence to enable us to form a correct opinion. We judge according to the little we know. Did we know all, we should oftentimes, as I did in the instance of the noble tree, arrive at a very different conclusion.

"If we knew all!" How much is involved in this expression! Did we know all we have to enjoy, it might render us more thoughtless than we are; and did we know what we have to endure, it would alarm us, and poison our peace.

Well do I remember one who was envied on account of his position and the pleasures he enjoyed. His house and his grounds, his horses and his dogs, were his delight. "If there

be a happy man upon earth," said a thoughtless neighbour, "he is one." But when he said this he did not know all. At that very time the "happy man" was overwhelmed with debts, and an execution was in his house. I visited him in the King's Bench prison, and all he had left was a scanty supply of furniture and a few pictures hung round his room, of the horses and dogs in which he had so greatly delighted. We should envy no man his possessions, for we seldom are aware of the tenure under which they are held: nor his pleasures, for they may be short-lived, even if they are not sinful.

Though in his wisdom our heavenly Father has hidden his great designs, he has made known enough to call forth our thankfulness and praise. We know a little if we know not much; we know a part if we know not all; be it ours humbly to consider, gratefully to profit, and diligently to improve.

If we knew all we should see clearly that every sin, sooner or later, brings with it its punishment. In common prudence, then, as well as from higher motives, should we not shrink from every evil act? When Balak, the Moabitish king, saw the growing power of the children of Israel, and what they had done to the Amorites, he would try to bribe Balaam to curse them. "Come now, I pray thee," said he, "curse me this people: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed." If he had known all he would hardly have taken this useless trouble; for when Balaam, the son of Beor, the man whose eyes God had opened, came, and took up his parable, a part of his words were, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee." No marvel that Balak's anger was kindled.

Had haughty Belshazzar known all, he would never have held his royal feast, nor drawn down on his guilty head the punishment of his pride and impiety. He could see, in his fancy, beforehand, his princes and his lords, his wives and his concubines, dressed up in all the bravery of their attire, drinking wine from the golden vessels of the house of the Lord to the "gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone;" but he could not foresee the handwriting on the wall: when that met his eyes, the joints of his loins were loosed.

What errors are made in the attainment of worldly possessions! how lynx-eyed we are to every prospect of success, and how blind to the disasters which may occur! I knew a young man, well brought up, who, disliking the slow method of making money by business, and in a hurry to be rich,

rushed off to California to get gold. Had he known all he would have been less sanguine and more cautious. I saw him before he set off, with his outfit for his enterprise; and I saw him after he came back, without a shirt or a shilling.

When we envy the strong man his strength, the wise man his learning, and the rich man his wealth, we know not what we do. Did we know all, and were we acquainted with their several trials and infirmities, often, perhaps, our envy would be suppressed, and we should humbly seek after that godliness which is great gain, "having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Notwithstanding the information given to us, that the "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," we generally give ourselves but little trouble to know it. Had we a more extended knowledge of ourselves than we have, the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," would be much more frequently offered up by us all.

We know but little of those around us; if we knew all, we might judge them more forbearingly than we often do. There are many who would be liberal, yet have nothing to bestow; many who would be lenient whom duty compels to be severe, and many whom we take to be churlish entertain kindly feelings for us in their hearts. From day to day we are making these mistakes, and judging others unjustly.

The hollow tree in the grounds of the farmer, which at first so much deceived me, was not more nollow than the pleasant deceits of the world. Seen on one side they are fair indeed; but what are they when examined on the other? Did we know all, we should surely regard them more warily.

How little do we seek to know of the love of God, and of the abounding grace of the Redeemer! Could we reckon up our mercies, they would far outnumber the hairs of our head. How is it, then, that our prayers are so much longer than our praises? and that our desires so much exceed our thankfulness?

Afflicted Christian, "tossed with tempest, and not comforted," you are cast down by trouble; but if you knew all that was in store for you, your harp, taken from the willows, would resound with unceasing hallelujahs. If you knew all, the present grief would be lost in the future joy; for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9. Take courage; it is because you know but little that you are so fearful: did you know all, your heart would be bold as a lion's.

THE RECONCILIATION.

A GENTLEMAN was riding quietly up the avenue leading to the house of a friend, when he was met by the whole family in carriages gaily adorned, and filled with smiling faces. He was immediately recognised, the carriages were stopped, and reining his horse at the door of the one which contained the head of the cheerful party, a friendly greeting followed.

"I am glad to see you, Meredith," exclaimed the bright specimen of an English country gentleman, whose countenance beamed with intelligence and pleasure.

"But you must turn your horse's head and join us, for you will enjoy the celebration to which we are going as sincerely as any of us, and I can insure you an equally hearty welcome. It is a 'prodigal son' sort of an affair."

After a short discussion, Mr. Meredith consented to the wishes of his friend, and the party proceeded towards the rich and beautiful domain of the proprietor, a man of good family and large estate, whose declining years were cheered by the occurrence of an unexpected and joyous event.

As they entered the grounds, sights and sounds of merriment and glee might be seen upon the green and round many a stately tree. Games, music, archery, and tables laden with good cheer, while numbers of respectable yeomen, with their families, of all ages and sizes, clad in their best attire, presented a scene at which any landlord might rejoice. But the crowning joy of the day, both to landlord and tenantry, was at the moment when sir George, having summoned all within hearing, by the flourish of trumpets, to the lawn, presented his only son, long lost to him, to them, and to virtue—once more restored, it was fondly hoped, to all. The father's faltering voice, the son's repressed emotion and modest bearing, the hearty cheer which rose from the full hearts of friends and neighbours, yeomen and peasantry, struck with exquisite rapture upon the kind and generous feelings of the man who had been instrumental in bringing this happy change to pass.

"Is it not a sight worth seeing, an event worth celebrating?" asked Mr. Perrin of his friend Meredith. "A little while ago the old man sat alone in his dreary old hall, meditating a deed of disinheritance, which would have transferred the honours and possessions of his ancient house to a distant relative, while the natural heir to his broad acres was reveling abroad in wickedness and disgrace to his honourable name."

"And how came about such a happy reunion?" asked Meredith, with lively interest.

"My father accomplished it, sir," whispered a daughter of Mr. Perrin, who stood near; and while her father stepped forward to receive the congratulations and compliments of some gentlemen of the neighbourhood, she continued: "Had you seen how anxiously he has laboured, how he has travelled, corresponded, entreated, argued, you would not wonder at his evident delight in the success of his efforts to reconcile father and son, so long and unhappily estranged from each other. But my father is not easily discouraged from persevering in a good action; and he was determined that this noble estate should not pass into the hands of a stranger, if any hope remained of the reformation of the heir. My dear father is a good man," she energetically concluded, as he returned to their side.

"Do tell me, Perrin," said his friend, "how you managed to restore this young man to his father's favour."

"Why, you see, though as the patron, the friend, and landlord of a prosperous and happy tenantry, sir George was resolved to save them (since it was in his power to do so) from the hands of a graceless spendthrift, who would never reside among them himself, but would probably place over them some hard griping agent, while he spent the produce of his rent-roll in dissipation abroad; perhaps cut down the fine old timber, and consign a venerable mansion to the hammer;—while, however, he, foreseeing this, could strike the name of his worthless boy out of a piece of parchment, he could not so easily erase it from his kind old half-broken heart. He still loved his son, his only child, and mourned over his ruin as only a parent, slighted, insulted, and forsaken, can mourn. I found out this, and then I set off in pursuit of the son. Long I travelled, tracing him from place to place on the continent, and never hearing of him anything but what was disgraceful to his country and himself. At last I found him, lost in dissipation, penniless, and deep in debt. A pretty hopeless case, thought I; I am thankful his father does not see him now. I got him to my hotel, and sobered him. He had no home; he was almost in rags, and was a little ashamed, I thought, of being seen by his father's friend. I detained him some time, supplying him with all that was necessary, and then requested him to return with me to England.

"'Never,' he said. 'My father has refused to see me; refused to send me money. Let him disinherit me if he will; I care not. I have lived by dice, and can do so still. I will never appear a suppliant in his presence again.'

"'Listen, young man,' I said. 'Your father refused to

see you when you dared to come with effrontery and insolence to demand as a right what only his bounty and kindness had too liberally supplied. He only refused to send you money to squander in gambling and riot among your infamous companions. You may have lived a little while by dice, but you will die by them as surely as you persevere in such dishonour.

" 'Your language is free, sir,' he fiercely exclaimed.

" 'It is faithful,' I replied, 'and you must hear me out; then decide.' I went on to speak of the honourable position he had lost, and contrasted with it his present degradation. Then I sketched his lonely father, and all his wise reasons for the step he was preparing to take.

" 'Sir,' he exclaimed, at last, 'you may spare me further. My father could not, and would not, receive me again, even if I gave up what has offended him. You may ask him to forgive me before he dies, or before I die.'

" 'Ask him yourself,' I earnestly replied. 'He yet loves you; it is not too late.'

" 'Loves me? Impossible!'

" Now I had got the right key; and, following up my advantage, I pressed it home, till that obdurate hardened heart gave way, and the boy actually wept over my assurances of his father's love.

" 'And did you come so far to tell me this?' he asked, in an altered tone.

" 'Yes; and to take you back to enjoy proofs of it, unless you prefer infamy, starvation, and death.'

" 'Prefer them!' he cried, with animation; 'prefer them to honour, happiness, and my father's love? I have been mad. I am coming to my senses. I will go with you.'

" 'Home!' said I, with emphasis.

" And there he is! Look at them," continued the faithful friend, as the son, supporting his father on his arm, acknowledged with graceful humility the honest welcomes of his future tenants; and, seeing Mr. Perrin and his party, they hastened to offer their grateful and affectionate attentions.

" Meredith, my dear fellow," said Mr. Perrin as they rode home, "I really do not remember that you have congratulated me upon my success as a peace-maker. 'Blessed are the peace-makers,' you know."

" True; and you are experiencing your blessing. The praise of men, the applause of your own gratified feelings, are a rich feast to you to-day."

" Well, if the praise is honestly earned, and the pleasure of

doing a good action is lawful, I suppose I have a right to all that both can afford; but I do not think the Divine beatitude ends there."

"Ah, I see. You think you deserve some future acknowledgment from the hand of God; is it not so?"

Mr. Perrin looked for a moment a little disconcerted; but presently, smiling again, he said, "You have a strange uncouth method of expressing yourself sometimes, Meredith."

"Nay, my friend, forgive me; I was only trying to express you. Perhaps you would rather it ran thus: Heaven will smile benignantly on philanthropic deeds. I thought certainly that your first speech savoured something of presumption; and so does the thing signified in its more courtly disguise."

"Then you do not think peace-making acceptable to the Divine Being? I think it is a part of the charity that covers a multitude of sins."

"Look into the motive, Perrin. There is a Scripture which says of men who did right things from a wrong motive, 'Verily they have their reward.' In the friendly service you have rendered here, were not your views bounded by the prosperity of this ancient family, and the preservation of their noble estate? What share had the glory of God, the example of Jesus, in the trouble you took, and the sacrifices you made?"

"I cannot positively remember that these had anything to do with it, certainly."

"Then you must be content with the reward you sought, and which exceeds your most sanguine expectations. You have no right to expect the reward of motives which never influenced you at all."

"Were not my motives legitimate ones?"

"Oh, yes; but the same conduct, pursued in the spirit and footsteps of Him who went about doing good, consecrated by love to his person, obedience to his commands, and zeal for his glory, would have presented an aspect in which it could be viewed graciously by Him who has said that nothing done in his name shall lose its reward. Without these consecrating motives, it cannot rise above the level of any act of your life, for 'whatsoever is not of faith is sin.'"

"Ah, Meredith, you were always a little puritanical in your notions, and you like to take one down, when one gets something self-complacent, still."

"My dear friend, I was only anxious to distinguish between things that differ, and to remind you that merit before God must depend upon motive; that he sees clearly where men

cannot see at all ; and his estimate of a human heart, whence motives spring, is not at all flattering to human pride."

" Well, we can all only do our best while we live, and hope for mercy on our mistakes when we die. That is my religion."

" Then it is a false one, Perrin. But may I venture to use one of the privileges of friendship, and tell you faithfully of a matter that seems to me somewhat inconsistent just now ?"

" Oh, certainly. I cannot be disturbed out of my complacency to-day ; and you know I make generous allowances for your crotchet, worthy friend."

" How is it that you, who have done so much to reunite estranged friends, and who seem to appreciate the happiness of the peace-maker, can be content to live in a state of enmity and at variance with a Relative and a Friend of your own ?"

" I!" exclaimed Mr. Perrin, in astonishment ; " impossible ! Whom can you possibly mean ? I do not know the human being with whom I would refuse to shake hands at this moment."

" Dear sir," said Miss Perrin, " you have been misinformed ; my father is no man's enemy, and has no enemies : every one who knows him respects and loves him."

" I fear this is no calumny. I am informed, on good authority, that you have a Friend whom you have treated with slight and ingratitude. He loves you, and desires to win you to him ; but you have not sufficient congeniality with him to recognise the efforts he has made to attract your regard."

" You greatly surprise me, Meredith, with such an extraordinary charge as this. I am totally ignorant, and innocent too, of the whole matter."

" I reminded you just now of God's estimate of the human heart—'deceitful above all things.' Will my young friend Clara ever forgive me for saying to her dear and valued father that he is living in enmity against his best and truest Friend ; that he is 'without God in the world ;' therefore as destitute spiritually as the lost heir was temporally, and therefore under the condemnation of an offended Father ?"

" You speak so gravely, Meredith, or else I should laugh at such nonsense. Do you seriously mean that I am the enemy of God, or under his displeasure ? How can you justify such a fancy ? I am regular in my religious duties ; I allow no improper disregard of the sabbath-day : I acknowledge almost every day the kind Providence that protects me ; I am just and exact in all my dealings ; and really I don't know what more need be, unless, indeed, you would have me

adopt that puritanical cant which I hate; which gives you chapter and verse for everything; which treats man as a mere automaton, instead of the reasonable, accountable, intellectual being that he actually is; who shall give account of himself at last before a just and impartial Judge, and be rewarded or condemned as his case may be. I say I like quiet, peaceable, practical religion, and have no fancy for talking much about it. As for all your varying creeds, and opinions, and fancies, I say with the poet about them—

‘For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
He can’t be wrong whose life is in the right.’”

“If you and the poet mean the whole man by what you call life, I could agree; but it is not so. You allude to outward conduct and actions, which may be influenced by a hundred things wholly independent of God. You reminded me just now (I will omit chapter and verse) of two men who went up to the temple to pray: one stood up with great dignity, and said, ‘Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men, nor even as this publican.’ I do this and that, and consider myself a most exemplary character in this world, by which means I expect to secure great happiness in the world to come.”

“Nay, nay, you are going beyond the mark. I said we must all look for mercy for our mistakes; for who is perfect?”

“But a perfect God, having proclaimed a perfect law, demands a perfect obedience. How can the just and impartial Judge you described just now be satisfied with less? Let us try ourselves by the true standard, and we shall be forced in candour to condemn ourselves. You admit mistakes: what is a mistake?”

“Why, I mean little faults—things that would have been better otherwise, but not having much harm in them.”

“A little harm, then. But we read in God’s revealed word his estimate of man’s mistakes: ‘The thought of foolishness is sin.’ ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’ He that ‘offendeth in one point is guilty of all.’ The question is not, how much harm have you done? how many ‘mistakes’ have you made? But one idle word, one covetous desire, one stray affection, exposes to the consequences of the curse; and the wages of sin is death. A sailor friend of mine once narrowly escaped sudden destruction at sea. His ship sprang a-leak; but for some time no one knew it. She filled fast; all hands worked at the pumps, but in vain for any possibility of repairing the leak; silently and surely the work of destruc-

tion was going on ; the water gained upon them ; they took to the boats, and their lately trusted ship went down before their eyes. One leak had sunk the ship. All appeared right above board ; but the mischief was unseen, the element of destruction was in. And one sin is sufficient to sink the soul of man for ever. All may seem right and fair in outward conduct, but the element of destruction is in."

"Then, according to this view, it is impossible for any human being to be saved. You are impaled on the horns of your own dilemma ; and how you have any peace, with these impressions, I am at a loss to imagine."

"These impressions are, nevertheless, stamped with the seal of truth ; there is no gainsaying the fact, that there is not a just man upon earth who sins not ; and before we can plead the merit of a good action, we are silenced by a demand of atonement for many bad ones. And where is the atonement which can satisfy the justice of a God who solemnly keeps his word ?"

"Surely you forget that 'He is not extreme to mark what is done amiss.' He is too merciful to exact what, from the nature of the case, cannot be perfectly rendered."

"Just suppose a sovereign, who has promulgated a code of laws, obedience to which would secure the happiness and prosperity of his subjects ; but there are some who are so infirm in principle, so badly brought up, that they cannot abstain from theft. Must he, therefore, blot the penalty of theft from his statute book, in pity to their weakness, and so relax the integrity of his government and the veracity of his word, bringing himself into contempt among his people who are honest, to save from justice those who are not ?"

"No, certainly, there could be no confidence in such government."

"Neither could angels and archangels, and whoever else may constitute the unfallen creation of the Most High, continue to adore a God who bestowed mercy at the expense of justice upon a world of rebels such as we."

"Well, then, inform me what must be the condition of that poor self-deceived fellow B—, whom you know. He was once a vile character, a drunkard, a thief, a poacher ; he was ready for any scheme of darkness that could be proposed to him : but he is now one of your saints ; he prays, and would preach, too, if one would listen to him. But I really believe the fellow is sober and honest enough now. By which part of his life is he to be judged ? If by the first, he cannot escape hell ; if by the last, he ought, of course, to go to heaven."

"If his profession be sincere (and the fruits of sobriety and honesty you say are there), his sins have been punished; hell has been endured, and they will no more be laid to his charge. Is not this justice and mercy?"

"I admit the mercy; but where is the justice?"

"In the suffering and death of God's dear Son, in whom that man believes, and for whose sake his sins and iniquities will be remembered no more."

"Ah, here you avail yourself of that doctrine which seems to me to excuse wickedness, and depreciate morality and virtue, making it as easy for a bad man to be saved as the man who has lived a good and useful life."

"It is, however, true doctrine; it is God's way of humbling human pride, and the only way by which he can be approached, either by the self-satisfied moralist who has only done a little harm, or the open sinner who has done a great deal. Jesus is the way; his death for our life—his merit for our sin. He for us in wrath and punishment; we in him for pardon, peace, and glory. Those who try any other way to heaven are the 'thieves and robbers' in God's sight, however honest and respectable they may think themselves."

"I cannot agree to such a religion as this," said Mr. Perrin, warmly. "I do not believe in anything so easy for a wicked man, so unnecessary for a good man. You misrepresent the character of God, and the principles on which he will judge the world."

"My dear friend, I am aware that this does not suit the god of your imagination; but it is one of the cheats of the father of lies to induce each man to robe his deity in a character which saves himself."

"Do you mean me to understand that I am in the same position before God as the reprobate I have named?"

"No, assuredly not; he, with all his sins transferred to Jesus his substitute; with his simple faith in God's word, and his humble acceptance of God's mercy, on God's own terms, stands before him in Christ a justified man, and, so dying, enters into the joy of his Lord. You (bear with me, dear Perrin; these are days when sincerity and truth, if unpalatable, are too often laid aside), you, without his sins, and also without his faith, ignorant that you need a Saviour, and proudly fancying you can strike a balance in your favour when your 'little harm' and your many charities are fairly weighed, stand before God without either imputed or personal righteousness, and must be speechless and confounded in the discovery

of the tremendous error you have cherished. Was I very wrong when I said you were living in enmity against your best Friend, when even my statement of a fundamental truth provokes your anger and contempt? Your god is a benevolent inconsistency, on whom none could depend; but he that is our God is the God of salvation, unto whom 'belong the issues from death.' You have no sound argument wherewith to support your idol. I point you to the Bible, and entreat you to search and see if what I have said be not the very truth of God."

"You see, Meredith, my conscience is against you. I am utterly unconscious of a desire to do anything opposed to God's commandments; and it is impossible for me to take a place by the side of a man who has broken them almost all. I should be a hypocrite indeed to pretend to such humility as that."

"Until your conscience is enlightened to see in God's light it must be so, dear Perrin; but when quickened into spiritual life by the animating touch of God the Spirit, you will understand that secret which dwells only with them that fear him."

"It must be a miraculous transformation, then, after all,"

"No man calleth Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost," said Meredith. "But, Perrin, do you remember the evening we walked together by the river side?"

"Ah, when we witnessed that frightful scene of the human body being drawn up to the bank?"

"Yes; do you recollect its appearance? It was decayed, and no feature remained legible. Do you remember, too, how hastily all the requisite forms were carried through, and the disfigured mass consigned to its last resting place?"

"Yes, very well; and we never knew to a certainty who the poor object was, nor how he had met such a fate."

"It was very shortly afterwards," continued Meredith, "that I was summoned to a house of mourning, where an affectionate wife and children wept around the death-bed of the husband and father. He lay in cold unconsciousness of all their sorrow, no longer returning their looks of love, but rapidly approaching that condition in which they could not longer gaze on his remains, but were fain to bury their dead out of their sight."

"You are quite dismal," said Mr. Perrin. "Pray favour us with some brighter picture."

"There is one other scene I must recall. A little bed, in a quiet chamber, and on it reclined the beautiful form of a

child, apparently asleep. The long lashes reposed on the soft round cheek, the delicate colour yet lingered brightly there, the rosy lips seemed just parting to whisper as in a dream, and the little white dimpled hand lay gracefully on the scarcely whiter coverlet. I could not believe the terrible cry which had summoned us all to that room in haste; but it was too true. A bloodvessel had broken on the brain, and it was upon the sleep of death that we stood gazing, almost incredulous. But the fair flower was soon laid in its little coffin, and borne away to the tomb. Perrin, that loathsome mass at the river side, putrid and decayed; that man cut down in the prime of manhood, and just touched with the corruption to which man is doomed; and that lovely child, so fair, so life-like, were in one thing all alike, all told the same sad tale: they were all dead. But I have not recalled these scenes to harrow your feelings, but to illustrate a fact. The open profligate, so hardened in iniquity as to be even despised and shunned by his fellow men, so deformed by sin that no trace of the moral likeness in which man was originally made remains; the orderly and respectable man, who very seldom seems to do wrong, but lives without provoking censure or deserving praise; and a third, the pride and honour of his neighbourhood, moral, intellectual, generous, patronising virtue and discountenancing vice, having 'the form of godliness,' though not the power: in one thing these are all alike; they are all dead to the living God. In vain he seeks a response of love, a vibration of spiritual congeniality in the beautiful or in the vile. To his penetrating eye there is no difference in the secret root which man cannot see. All have fallen, and come short of his glory; and the aspiring moralist, who is building himself an ascent to what he calls heaven, is as far from the presence of Jehovah as the vilest convict in our penal colonies. It is humbling, but it is true; we are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and nothing but the power of God can work that miracle of raising us to eternal life."

"Well, you have certainly prostrated human excellence low enough; and now be kind enough to let us hear what sort of a character you suppose is pleasing and acceptable to God."

"Absolutely and unquestionably, the character of Him who did for us what you did for the son of your friend—the character of Jesus, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He is the 'beloved Son,' in whom the Father is 'well pleased.' And, relatively, those who believe in Jesus, who seek forgiveness of any and every sin through his blood,

and sanctification, or restored congeniality with God, by his Spirit. It is 'not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us;' and, saved in Jesus, we have access to God, peace with God, approval from God, because whatsoever we then do is done in the name and for the sake of him who loved us, and gave himself for us. Good works on this ground, Perrin, as many, as noble, as constant as you please, ascend as the sweet incense of grateful love."

"You have preached us a fine sermon, and all because I thought well of myself for having been a successful peace-maker."

"Pardon me; you seemed to think you deserved to be thought well of by God, though you reject his way of acceptance for yourself and your actions. I have endeavoured to prove you wrong by scriptural argument, and I confess it would be to me a blessed and glorious sight, ay, and to angels too, to see you, beloved and respected among men as you are, honourable, upright, moral, generous, kind, as I believe you to be, accepting that earnest entreaty, without offence, which prays you in Christ's stead, 'Be ye reconciled to God;' and throwing aside that self-righteousness which keeps you at enmity and distance, casting yourself at your Redeemer's feet, a pleader for full, free, unconditional salvation as the gift of his bounty, the triumph of his grace. The happy scenes we have witnessed to-day were but a faint illustration of the love of our Father for his wandering children, and the joy of their reconciliation to home, to happiness, and to him."

"You are an enthusiast, Meredith; but your religion will never be popular; it is too levelling, and requires too complete a surrender of even the best part of one's self. But suppose my pride were to contemplate striking to this creed for bad men as well as good—"

"Excuse the interruption. You say well that religion, true religion, is not popular. 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' His people are 'a little flock,' a very small remnant in the great human family; but the fault is man's own: 'Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life,' said Jesus. And not many great, or rich, or noble, or learned, are called; they are too busy glorying in their wealth, or power, or wisdom, to come to Him in whose presence no flesh shall glory. But your pride, Perrin, surely need not refuse to bend where the patriarch Abraham, the monarch David, the prime minister Daniel, the learned Saul, all bowed, believing and resting in the finished work of Jesus."

"But I was going to ask, as you say that I am so dead to God that I cannot live to him of myself, but must receive life from him, how can I know that he will give it to me? how can I tell that I am one of his elect?"

"Ah, Perrin, you have rushed into the cowardly refuge of all cavillers, who seek to hide their own unwillingness to come to God under a pretence that he may not be willing to receive them. I ask in return, how do you know that you are not one of his elect? Who hinders you from asking now for that Holy Spirit, whose influence can control the rebel will, can quicken from death in sin to life in righteousness?"

"I am not aware of any hindrance in myself. I can certainly do so if I think it needful."

"Then be assured that there is no hindrance in God. If you do not come, you testify of yourself that it is because you will not; you do not think it needful. And if you do come, you will be the first to ascribe it to sovereign grace and electing love. When you contemplate the innocent and loving Saviour in the agony of a cruel death, and made a curse that guilty man might live and enjoy a blessing, and see that without such an expiation no sinner could be saved; that with it and by it any sinner may be saved; that you are saved;—you will no longer think lightly of any sin which adds a pang to the anguish of the Son of God. It is only by 'looking unto Jesus' that we get right views of God and of ourselves, of sin and its fearful wages; and in the matchless wisdom that conceived, and the love that executed the design, behold how justice itself was able to open wide the door of mercy, and to let Almighty love flow forth to fallen creatures. Only believe; faith is the medium, but faith is the gift of God. Then ask for faith."

Mr. Perrin was silent; his daughter was thoughtful. This God was not the God they had worshipped or desired. Their God was "a consuming fire," for there was no Saviour, no days-man between. But they could act like the Bereans; the subject was worthy. They would search; and see if these things were so.

B. T.

THE HEAVENLY VISITOR.

"WHAT wilt thou have me to do?" must ever be the language of faith, hope, and love—the three Christian graces which, when genuine, go always in company, and which all carry the soul, not merely to Christ's feet, but to his service. These

graces are given for self-discipline, for exercise from glory to glory, until we reach the church which is above.

When our Lord had driven the devils out of the mad man of the country of the Gadarenes, we read that he who had been possessed earnestly besought the Lord that he might abide with him; but "Jesus suffered him not," but said unto him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things God hath done for thee." There are two things in the Christian life—labour and happiness; and this is their true order: labour should be our object; fruit for Christ, rather than enjoyment. To do good, to win souls to Christ, should be our work, leaving happiness to follow if God will; but if not, still to work on. In heaven labour is unknown, at least in the meaning which we give to the word; the saints in heaven "rest from their labours." But in this life labour must precede happiness. Man labours under the burden of his sins, and feels himself to be out of the kingdom of heaven; and the Saviour's invitation to him is, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." When newly converted, the soul does not at first think of labouring for others; it begs to stay with Christ; but it must learn gradually that to labour for Christ is the only way to keep with him. Christ first gives the soul deliverance, and then says, "Go work to-day in my vineyard:" go forth on your pilgrimage of duty; "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" go home to your friends, to all the world, and tell them how great things God has done for you. As you go, I will go with you; but if you go not, I will depart from you. There is a story told of an ancient recluse, an inmate of a house even in those early days mistaken as the gate of heaven. It runs thus: One day, when he had been unusually fervent in prayer, he suddenly found his dark cell illuminated by an unearthly light, and there stood before him a vision of the Saviour, his countenance beaming with love, and his hands outstretched with kind invitation. At the same moment the bell began to sound, which called the man, in the regular course of his duty, to take his turn in distributing alms to the poor at the gate. For an instant he hesitated, so absorbed was he in the rapturous vision as to question whether he might not stay to enjoy it, and leave some one else to look after the poor; but the next instant found him, true to his duty of charity, on his way to the gate. As soon as he had finished his work of relieving the poor, his self-denying work of humble love, he returned in sadness to his cell, not doubting that the heavenly vision had taken flight;

but to his surprise and joy it was still there, the face beaming upon him with a smile even more full than before of Divine beauty and ineffable love: and there came from the celestial vision these words, "Hadst thou stayed, I had fled."

The legend, though fabulous, illustrates the subject in hand. Thus it is that the Saviour stays with and smiles upon those who imitate his own example of self-denying love. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." We may sometimes be apt to indulge ourselves with the delusion that we are sitting at the feet of Christ when we are only seeking our own ease. We should try our frames and feelings by the touchstone of self-denial; labouring in Decapolis when self would rather not is seldom a mistake. If we strive to stay with Christ as a selfish thing, we lose Christ; but if in love we go forth to obey Christ, we carry him everywhere with us, and he abides with us for ever.

M. W.

THORNS AND THISTLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

BIGOTRY.

"I AM happy to meet you at home, sir," said a gentleman, as he entered the library of Mr. Hatton, who was seated there, reading with his son. "When I last had the honour of calling on you I found you, in accordance with your general character, ready to assist me in forwarding a plan for promoting the temporal benefit of some poor people in this neighbourhood, without respect of persons or of religious opinions."

"Certainly, sir," Mr. Hatton replied. "I would remember that we are enjoined—'As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men,' Gal. vi. 10."

"I admire your liberal feeling, sir," continued the visitor; "and it has encouraged me to apply now on behalf of our neighbours in a matter more important than temporal concerns, something conducive to their spiritual improvement; and I think you will not refuse to aid a plan having that aim."

"Anything that would really tend to that purpose I hope I shall always be ready to assist."

"Would *really* forward! Well, sir, of course you agree with me that religious instruction is likely to do that."

"I do; and as there is but one true source of religious instruction, namely, the written word of God, whatever promotes a knowledge of that word I should feel it a privilege to forward to the best of my ability."

"You mean the Bible, sir. Then, you will assist us. Our

priests read the Bible, and teach its contents to their flocks, who could not otherwise understand them. The Catholic congregation has, of late, increased in this place, so that the chapel is not large enough for it. Will you subscribe towards building a larger? Several Protestants have done so."

"I cannot, sir, and for this reason: I think that, instead of the contents of the Bible, your priests teach the people the traditions and inventions of men."

"That is a serious accusation, Mr. Hatton."

"It is; but with sorrow I say that it is true. You are annoyed, sir; and believe me that I would not willingly offend you. Will you kindly bear with me while I say a few words?" The visitor bowed coldly, and Mr. Hatton went on.

"You know, sir, for we must all know, that we are sinners every one of us; therefore it is to every one a question of vital importance, 'How should man be just with God?' And I would earnestly urge the necessity of not being satisfied with an answer to it upon the authority of any fellow sinner; but let all seek out the book of God, and learn what he has revealed upon the subject. I would have them compare the instructions given by human teachers with the contents of that book; remembering that if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20.

"What you say, sir, may seem fair; but I must not discuss the point with you now. I have, I suppose, no chance of obtaining your help. Excuse me, but we expected more liberality of mind from you, sir." The gentleman took leave.

"Papa," said Alfred, as soon as they were alone, "I have heard you speak of bigotry as an unchristian feeling. Perhaps you will now explain to me how your refusal of this gentleman's request differs from bigotry?"

"The difference, my son, is, I think, precisely the same as that we have on former occasions conversed about between the genuine fruit which a branch was originally intended to produce, and the useless hurtful thorns into which evil has distorted it. Steady adherence to right principle may be considered as a feeling implanted in our nature at the creation; and bigotry as, what the author whom I quoted on this subject aptly terms, the abortive representation of that feeling."

"I asked the question, papa, because I have often seen you assist the efforts of Christians who differed from you in many things, when they tried to promote a knowledge of religion; therefore I wanted to know why you refused doing so now."

Was it an adherence to principle to refuse this application, while it would have been bigotry in the other instances?"

"I think so, Alfred, and for this reason. The persons you refer to belonged to denominations of Christians who, while they differ from me and from each other in points concerning church-fellowship and outer forms, all hold 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and seek to disseminate it in the world, knowing that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,' Acts iv. 12. It would be what I conceive is bigotry were I to refuse helping them with heart and hand, to the best of my ability, in this good work. The appeal made to me to-day is quite a different matter. Were I to answer it as the applicant wished, I should be assisting in the promulgation, not of truth, but of destructive error—error on the most important doctrinal points; helping to lead my fellow-creatures, not to flee for refuge to the hope set before us in the gospel—that hope which we have for an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast—but to that refuge of lies which the hail shall sweep away, and the hiding-place that the waters shall overflow:" see Heb. vi. 18, and Isa. xxviii. 17.

"I have read fearful accounts of the errors and absurdities of popery on the continent, papa," said Alfred; "but we see little of such things in the British dominions."

"For which reason, perhaps, we are too apt to think little of such things, and not to consider that wrong doctrine will inevitably lead to wrong practice, though under some circumstances this result cannot be so obvious as under others. You spoke of the absurdities which popery leads to in foreign lands. I will tell you an incident that occurred in one not so far off, and which made a great impression upon my mind.

"Some years ago I went to visit our cousins, who reside in Ireland, in a small country town, and not by any means in a wild or uncivilized district. We heard one day the *keene*, or funeral cry, with which the approach of a funeral among the lower orders is always announced—a loud mournful song, in which a number of women praise the deceased, and fill the air with their lamentations. This custom is very ancient, and of eastern origin. Jeremiah alludes to it when he says, 'Call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for the cunning women, that they may come; and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters,' Jer. ix. 17. The funeral, accompanied by these cries, generally moves slowly along; but on the present occasion the hearse

came at as quick a pace as the two horses which drew it were able to trot; the coffin actually was jolting up and down, and so were two or three women who sat round it. A number of people ran at the top of their speed after the hearse. Then came a long row of covered cars, or jingles, as they are called by the Irish; then a row of carts full of women; then several horsemen, all jogging at the same rate. My friends, though long resident in Ireland, were as much surprised at this extraordinary procession as I was, or rather at the indecorous speed with which it travelled. Only for the solemnity of the occasion, the scene would have appeared highly ludicrous. On asking the meaning of it, we were told that, according to the superstitious belief of the peasantry, the soul of the person last buried in a churchyard was obliged to draw water for all the souls confined in purgatory until another interment took place. It happened this day that another man was to be buried in the same churchyard to which the funeral we saw was hastening; and the object of this unwonted speed was to arrive first, and leave the labour of water-drawing to the next comer.”*

“What ridiculous, degrading superstition!” said Alfred.

“Indeed it is; and I think you must feel satisfied that it is not bigotry to refuse support to a system which teaches the doctrine of purgatory, from whence all this arose.”

“Certainly; and I hope I may never countenance anything that is likely to lead my fellow creatures into error.”

“I hope so too. At the same time, my dear boy, I would have you to be equally careful lest you discountenance anything that is likely to lead them into the truth. Ever guard vigilantly against that thorn of the mind, bigotry, which, if cherished, greatly impedes the growth of the good seed. Even the beloved apostle was not free from it, but showed such a feeling when he said, ‘We forbade him, because he followed not with us.’ May you ever be ready to give the right hand of fellowship to all who love the Lord Jesus, ‘whatever party name they bear;’ and like the ‘honest mind,’ described by a Christian writer as ‘above the cleverness of party spite,’ I would have you pursue your course through life—

“‘Truth your sole object; this with simple aim
Still following, caring little for the name;
Not with the poor intent to make her stand,
And wave your party’s ensign in her hand,
Mocking your neighbour’s pitiful mistake,
But for her own invaluable sake.’”

E. F. G.

* A fact witnessed by the writer.

BISHOP PORTEUS AND THE PRINCE OF WALES.

GEORGE the Fourth, when prince of Wales, appointed a grand military review to be held on the sabbath-day. The pious and venerable bishop Porteus, then bishop of London, heard of it; and, though confined to his habitation by that illness which issued in his death five days after, yet he hastened to the palace, and sought an interview with the prince. Feeble and almost voiceless, he entered the royal apartment, supported by two attendants. The scene was very affecting. With the tenderness of a father, and with the earnestness of one expecting to appear before the King of kings, he represented the evil and sin of desecrating God's holy day, and urged upon the prince the consideration of the bad effects which the example of one in his exalted station would have upon the present and eternal destinies of millions. The good bishop closed with the expression of his regret that his infirmities did not permit him to advance and give his last blessing to the heir of England's throne. The prince, much affected, fell on his knees, while the venerable man of God implored the blessing of heaven on his royal highness, rejoicing that the last act of his failing strength could thus be exerted in attempting to stop the progress of sabbath desecration.

The following anecdote of the prince, in reference to the sabbath-day, which is not, perhaps, generally known, seems a very suitable accompaniment :—A tradesman was sent for on the sabbath-day, as his royal highness was preparing to leave town early the next morning. That tradesman was one who feared God more than man; and, at the risk of offending the prince and losing his valuable patronage, he declined to attend on God's day, but took care to be at the palace at a very early hour on Monday morning.

"I sent for you yesterday," said the prince; "why did you not come?"

"The King wanted me."

"The king! I thought my father never sent for tradesmen on Sundays."

"Please your royal highness, I do not mean the king your father, but the King of kings."

A word fitly spoken is indeed, as Solomon says, like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Some of the last words of the prince, when wearing the crown as George the Fourth, alluded to his interview with the dying bishop. Two days before the king's death he declared

that nothing in his past life gave him more uneasiness than the recollection of desecrated sabbaths.

T. T.

THE BELGIAN HAWKER.

MY DEAR F—,

November 20th, 18—.

IN your letter of the 15th you send messages to Michael, whose conversation interested and edified you, and, wishing to excite the same feelings in your Christian friends at home, you ask me to write you all that I know of his history. To satisfy you, dear friend, I as soon as possible asked Michael some questions without letting him discover the cause of them, for I think it is always dangerous for a Christian to see himself become an object of importance. It was, therefore, best that he should not know I was writing to you about him.

Michael is one of a poor family of miners. His grandfather read the Bible, and boldly joined himself to the first Protestants at P—. His parents had fourteen children, twelve sons and two daughters. The father, although obliged to provide for all these by the work of his hands, yet, being able to read, exerted himself to have his sons taught; and so several of them, having early studied the Scriptures, attained the knowledge of the truth. However, among this numerous circle, only five brothers and the two sisters lived to grow up.

Michael, as well as his brothers, was sent to the mines as soon as he was strong enough. Though he had been a little while at school, yet he was far from being able to read, even intelligibly to himself. Yet, from what he had heard of the Scriptures, an inward voice seemed constantly to repeat to him that the true light was there. He attended religious meetings, and tried to hear the word of God as often as he could, even sometimes asking the Lord to enlighten him. At the age of fifteen or sixteen, no longer able to resist his desire for instruction, though he had little time, and still less disposable money, he spoke to a young teacher, who had shown him kindness: "Mr. A—, you love to do good, and are able."

"What do you mean, my boy?"

"If you would only instruct me," he tremblingly replied.

"If you have courage, and are willing to take pains, I am ready to help you."

Michael did not need to be twice told. For three or four years he came every day, after long and fatiguing work, to school; so he learned to read very well, to write, and to cipher a little. I remember seeing him when between the age of

eighteen and twenty; his dress was always neater than his brothers', and his manners more polite. When he was twenty-two, a custom-house officer of his acquaintance asked him one day whether he did not dislike so dirty a trade. "No," he replied; "I was brought up to it, and am used to it: besides, I have no other means of subsistence."

"But if I asked an office in the Customs for you?"

"Should I be much better off there than in the pit?"

"At least you would work in the light of day, and at a less dirty business."

Michael allowed his friend to make the request, and two years afterwards it was granted. There he forgot all his youthful impressions, threw himself entirely into the world, partaking of its pleasures and follies, and even sold his books. According to his own words, he completely rejected the Saviour, though all the time his conduct was moral, and honourable in the sight of men. So he lived on for seven or eight years, loving the world, and beloved by it.

In this state of stupor his conscience spoke but seldom, and so feebly that he ceased to hear it. But the Spirit of God blows when and where it listeth. Michael, without any apparent means, surrounded by the same people, by the same diversions, engaged in the same occupations, without any outward change, suddenly awoke from his deep lethargy; he heard the voice of the Son of God saying, "Unhappy man, where goest thou? what doest thou? Stop! throw not thyself into the abyss?" From that moment he had no rest; fear and trembling seized upon him. During the day he could enjoy nothing, and at night he was sleepless; his body wore away; he was in the deepest anguish of repentance; he felt that he had forsaken God, and conceived himself to be forsaken of him. He wept, he prayed, he asked, he sought, without obtaining any comfort. This lasted for six months; and Michael says that none who have not experienced the same can imagine his state. At last he was enabled to cry anew unto the Lord, and the cry reached his ears, *Psa. xviii. 6.* His God had not forgotten him. He was one of those who are kept as the apple of the eye. "Lord," he then said, "if thou wilt save and accept me for thy child, I ask but two things: that thou wouldst give me a lively and sincere faith in thy Son Jesus, and that thou wouldst fix me in a spot where the gospel is preached." A few weeks after Michael was sent to reside at L—F—, a village belonging to the Marquis d'A—, of whom I told you that he had built a magnificent church, and paid the clergyman.

Michael arrived at the very time when the marquis had quarrelled with his priest, and threatened the bishop with calling a Protestant minister, unless he speedily changed the incumbent. This threat having been fruitless, in less than a month there was evangelical worship at L— F— every Tuesday, conducted by pastors who came by turns. For want of a church, the marquis, in the meanwhile, got a room arranged, where he invited his people and friends to join him. He sent for Bibles, tracts, and all the books which the pastors mentioned, and scattered them liberally through the village. On this there arose a great commotion, a great desire among the people to know more; consequently a great crowding to the evangelical service. Michael admired the wonderful goodness of God, who had thus answered his humble and fervent prayer. Now he could not only hear the word expounded, but he had daily opportunities for reading and meditating over it with persons who were anxious to be taught. In his spare hours he went from house to house, gathering around him ten, twenty, or even thirty persons, to whom he read the Bible, explaining it as best he could, and praying with them. He got leave from the family with whom he boarded to have a weekly meeting in their house, sometimes held by himself, sometimes by one of the pastors who alternately came to L— F—.

The marquis, having heard of these, wished to see the pious custom-house officer, and to speak with him. "So," said he, "I had a Protestant in my village without knowing it. Take courage, my friend; go on. I admire your zeal." He did not know whence Michael drew strength and edification. He had found the Saviour; and now there was nothing he cared so much for as to make him known to his poor fellow-sinners. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," he said to one and all, "and thou shalt be saved." Without any care for the present, leaning on the best foundation for the future, he lived in the peace of God; he was, as himself said, the happiest of men. But this was not to last. Sooner or later the child of God must suffer persecution.

The Romanists, especially the priests, kept an eye on him. Three of his companions were inquirers; it was Michael who had seduced them! If a new member was added to the church, it was Michael who had led him astray! If any one began to read the Bible, it was Michael who had incited him! They gave warning to his superiors, adding all sorts of false accusations, which succeeded so well that, after twenty-two months at L— F—, in the middle of the night he received an order to

change his station within twenty-four hours. His three companions were also scattered; while four others, who had not troubled themselves about religion, remained quietly at their post. So here is our poor Michael away from his field of labour, and deprived of the means of grace. At three leagues from L—F— he rarely attended worship, for he had much difficulty in obtaining leave. But he was not discouraged. "If God be for me, who can be against me?" he said. "He is my salvation and deliverance; who can take him from me?"

In the opinion of his enemies he was yet too happy; they sent him further away, then still further; for years he was sent from one place to another, having now only the Bible and prayer to edify him, but thereby being in closer communion with his Saviour. His exemplary life at first drew on him the sarcasms, then the hatred, of his companions. They blamed him (to use the apostle's words) because he did "not run with them to the same excess of riot;" and they sought in every way to make him obnoxious to his employers: and his trials were not to end here.

The severity of his work, which required him to spend a great part of the night in the open air, crouching in a ditch, at the foot of a hedge, or behind a bush, gave him rheumatism in the knee; as soon as he complained of which he was accused of deceit and sloth. One evening, when he arrived at his post an hour too late, his superior roughly rebuked him; and when he mentioned his infirmity, they called it a mere pretext. But, his sufferings increasing, he begged leave of absence that he might get medical treatment. They refused it, unless he could bring a physician's certificate that he was unfit for his work. He brought one, signed by four doctors, which did not prevent them from maintaining that this rheumatism was a sham, an excuse for returning home. And as he insisted on it, they released him, with suspension of salary. He went to one of his brothers, who is poor, and burdened with a numerous family. After being there a few months he felt somewhat better, and, wanting to earn his livelihood again, he returned to his situation, resolved to ask for some diminution of duty. This also was refused; and at the end of some time, his rheumatism having returned with renewed virulence, he was obliged finally to resign, after being eighteen years in the Customs.

He hoped to be able to live on his retiring pension; but here also malice had gone before him. He had been evil spoken of to his employers; and they opposed where they ought to have supported him. In vain did Michael send petition after

petition to the minister to obtain his pension ; it was pitilessly refused. At first he seemed cast down by this ; but soon, his spirits rising, he said with pious resignation, " What can I do ? It is God who wills it so. He who turns the hearts of men as rivers of water, could he not have forced my employers to give me a pension ? He has not done so, which shows that he judges best I should not have it."

Rest and some remedies which he used were blessed. His leg seeming to require exercise, we advised him to ask for a situation as Bible colporteur, being persuaded that none could be fitter for the work. The hope of gaining a living by such a useful labour renewed Michael's energies. He quietly awaited the answer ; but it so happened that no new colporteur was wanted at that time, and so our friend's hope was again lost. Always sustained by the Lord, in whom he put all his trust, he again said, " What shall I do ? That was not to be my lot ; and shall I then be cast down ? No, no ; God knows that I am here, and that I need to be fed. He who gives the far more precious food for the soul, he who feeds the birds of the air, will also give me my daily bread. Until now has anything failed me ? Then why should I fear for the future ?" However, he could not remain in an indolent quietude. His little savings would soon have been spent, and none of his brothers could maintain him. He made some more efforts to get the pension of from two hundred to two hundred and fifty francs which belonged to him ; but though he assured them of his good conduct, and showed his medical certificate, all was useless. Being sent away with the utmost hardness, he felt persuaded that his eighteen years' service would go for nothing.

Quite resigned, Michael turned to another side. He spent his little all in furnishing a haberdashery shop, bought a portable chest covered with oil-cloth, took a licence as hawker, and began to travel and offer his merchandise from door to door. Soon his probity, his civility, and good-humour drew customers. Now he goes through about fifteen villages, welcomed everywhere, and not only offering his thread, needles, and ribands, but seeking everywhere, and at all times, to announce the gospel by openly confessing the name of his Saviour. He resides with one of his brothers, who is unmarried, like himself. Every morning, unless ill health prevents, he starts in a joyful spirit, persuaded, he says, that God himself conducts him from house to house. If there is anywhere a poor or solitary sufferer, an old man or an infirm old woman, Michael never fails to carry there the consolations of the gospel.

He reads to the afflicted one a portion of God's word, then converses and prays. He does not hold his time precious to himself if he can comfort the unhappy, dry their tears, revive the hope of some brother who is cast down. If you go to visit any of those who are small in the world's estimation, and give them some Christian exhortation, "Ah! yes," you hear them say, "Michael told me the same thing." "It is so that Michael explains things to us." In a word, Michael is everywhere; for one he has a word of edification, for another of exhortation; for this one a reproof, for the other an affable encouragement and bearing up. And where does he get all this? In his dear Bible, which never leaves him, and which he opens on every possible occasion. If a few tracts are given him for distribution, he first reads them himself that he may apportion them with more discernment. After the example of his Divine Master, he goes about from place to place doing good. So we have no reason to regret that he was not called to be a Bible colporteur, since in his present position, free from anything to rouse the prejudices which ordinarily oppose these dear servants of God, many more doors are open to him, and we can say with Michael, "All that God does is well done."

Here is what I have gathered concerning this lowly disciple of the Saviour. I send it you without adding anything or omitting anything, and pray that the Lord would bless the reading of it to his glory.

Your friend.

FIRST LOVE.

YOUNG Christian, dost thou sigh to wear
The wreath of amaranth, and bear
Upon thy brow the crown of victory?
In energy of new-born zeal,
Counting for loss earth's dearest weal,
Art ready for truth's sake almost to die?

Hast thou, upon the shining track
Of some blest saint, been looking back,
Till thine own heart has caught the sparkling ray,
And, gazing on that light serene,
Which borders on the world unseen,
Dost thou remember, 'tis the narrow way?

Not by the eagle's narrow flight,
Not by the seraph's wing of light,
Will they unto that vantage ground attain;
But by the slow laborious round
Of daily duty, often found
The path of self-denial and of pain.

Ye may not grasp the martyr's shield;
 Ye are too weak such arms to wield;
 Come back, nor deem such high-commission giv'n:
 Thy duties close around thee lie;
 Ponder their meaning heedfully;
 Through them alone thy pathway lies to heav'n.

Where'er the sacred name of home
 Her hallowed spell has round thee thrown,
 "There," has thy Master said, "go work for me."
 Whate'er thy state it matters not,
 Poor and unknown, or high thy lot,
 Ye may not from this first great lesson flee.

None to applaud—it brings no fame;
 Surrender of thyself 'twill claim;
 In others' joys content to merge thine own:
 Perchance the tongue of scorn to bear,
 Perchance the moan of fretful care,
 And still no murmur found in look or tone.

To discipline thy wayward will
 To prompt obedience; to fulfil
 With ready zeal the weary task assign'd;
 Around the couch of sickness bend,
 Where sorrow weeps her tale attend,
 And shed bright hope around the darken'd mind,

The sunlight of a soul forgiven,
 Investing all with hues of heaven,
 The clear calm estimate of things terrene;
 The love which thinketh evil never,
 But brings its bright and glad endeavour
 To bind all hearts in love and joy serene:

This is thy mission, O most blest!
 So early called! so sure thy rest!
 Say, young disciple, wilt thou bear thy part?
 Wilt thou thy Saviour trust, and do
 His work, because he wills it so;
 Nor at the seeming tribulation start?

Glory to Him, through whom alone
 This victory of faith is won;
 Glory through time and through eternity!
 For thee the veil is cleared away;
 Earth has no lure wherewith to stay
 Thy ransom'd soul, for evermore set free.

Go on thy way rejoicing; see
 All things do minister to thee:
 What matters it if clouds do sometimes low'r?
 Look not behind, but onward speed,
 Thy strength is equal to thy need,
 While heaven itself shall be thy glorious dow'r.



THE NEW GARDENER.

"I AM sorry to find your spirits still so depressed, dear Mrs. Norton. You ought to exert yourself and take comfort: your losses have been severe, but you have many blessings left. Would you not walk out this fine day, and visit your beautiful gardens? I dare say they are looking well now; and you used to take pleasure in them."

"I used," Mrs. Norton replied, "but nothing gives me pleasure now: besides, the gardener, who knew all my ways, has left us, and I have never been there since the new one came. I dislike new faces, and hate the idea of going there now. In short, everything seems against me." Nevertheless, her visitor urged the necessity for a walk so earnestly, that Mrs. Norton, partly to get rid of her, promised to follow her advice, and she departed.

"Truly," said Mrs. Norton to herself, "I may say as Job did, when my friends prescribe their various means of condolence, 'Miserable comforters are ye all!' As if walking about a garden could cure the grief I feel when I see my fire-side desolate; could make me forget that my children have been taken from me one by one, till I am almost alone in the

world! Why are these judgments laid on me? I am no worse than others."

Mrs. Norton's feelings found vent in this soliloquy, which she uttered almost unconsciously, while she stood near one of her green-houses, having, in fulfilment of her promise, strolled round the *parterre*; but so absorbed in thought as scarcely to observe that her choicest flowers were in blossom, and everything in the best possible order. As she ceased speaking a slight noise startled her, and turning round, she perceived the new gardener standing near, and employed in dressing a vine. Rather annoyed at the probability of his having overheard her words, she was going to move on, when he made a respectful salutation; and there was, as she thought, an expression of so much sympathy in his countenance, that she felt constrained to address him.

"The plants seem to thrive," she said, "and I never saw the garden looking better. I am sure you take good care of everything."

"I thank you very kindly for your praise, ma'am;" he replied; "and I hope I shall continue to deserve it by doing my duty."

These words were spoken with the Irish accent; and the look which accompanied them, while denoting proper respect, expressed, as she imagined, so much feeling, or even pity, that the lady could not pass on without saying something more, and remarked, "Your employment is a pleasant one. Which do you take most interest in, the fruits or flowers?"

"Well, ma'am," he said, "I do not think I ever do anything more interesting than what I am employed about at this moment—dressing the vines. And if," he continued with some hesitation, "if it would not be making too free, I could tell your honour *why*."

"Please do so, by all means; I should like to know."

"Because, ma'am, it always reminds me of my Saviour, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of all the care that God takes of his own people; and that gives me great comfort ma'am."

"Comfort! That is a thing hard to be found in time of trouble. Have you had such?"

"Yes; please your honour, yes; but I would not be without it, ma'am; for though true it is that 'no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby,'" Heb. xii. 11.

"Well! you have had sorrow, and found comfort in religion; but I want to know *how*?"

"In this way ma'am. I take my troubles to be proofs of God's love, because his word says, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' Heb. xii. 6. Now, ma'am, those that take care of the vines, prune the branches. The blessed Saviour said of himself and of his people, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches;' and God the Father is the good and careful husbandman who prunes the branches, that they may glorify him by bearing much fruit, John xv. 5, 2, 8."

The lady seemed to think for a few moments, and then asked, "What do you mean by 'bearing much fruit'?"

"So please you, ma'am, it means what the apostle Paul calls 'being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God,' Phil. i. 11, being 'fruitful in good works,' ma'am."

She seemed again to reflect upon his words, and said, looking at the vine about which he was employed, "But do *all* the branches that are pruned bear good fruit?"

"No, ma'am; only those that are united to the root, and receive nourishment from it. Separated from that, they may look green for a while, but will soon wither away and be fit for nothing but to be burned. Just as our Lord said, 'The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine.'"

"And, I suppose, you apply this part of the figure to very wicked people."

"Your pardon, ma'am. I should think it means all, however kind, or honourable, or well-spoken of, or decent in attending the outward forms of religion, who do not 'abide in Christ.'" He took a small Bible from a shelf on which flower-pots were ranged, and opening it at the 15th chapter of John's Gospel, continued: "You won't think I make too free in reading it for you, ma'am. It is God's own word. The Lord Jesus said, 'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.—If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned, v. 4, 6.'"

Again Mrs. Norton was silent; and the gardener, fearing he might be supposed to make too free, continued his work; but, doubtless, this poor Irishman lifted up his heart in prayer, that what he had ventured to say might prove a word in season to the afflicted lady. At length she spoke.

"How may we know," she said, "whether we abide in Christ or not? It seems a matter of importance."

He put away the pruning-knife, and took up the Bible again: "I believe, ma'am, so please you, the Scriptures would teach us that too. St. John says, 'He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.'"

True it is, as the apostle declares, that 'The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,' Heb. iv. 12. A sudden and startling thought flashed across Mrs. Norton's mind; doubtless suggested by Him whose office it is to 'convince the world of sin,' even the Holy Spirit of God; and she asked herself, "Am I walking as the Lord Jesus walked? Am I following his footsteps in my course through the world? Did I ever even *try* to be like him? No, no. Then what follows? I am *not* abiding in the vine. Ah! that is the reason why my troubles have done me no good; but every new one seems to make me more rebellious and miserable. I am a withered branch, fit for nothing but to be burned." She burst into tears, and walked out of the greenhouse, determining to banish such alarming thoughts from her mind: but she could not succeed; and after a few turns in the garden returned again, and said to the gardener, "Tell me, for you know the Bible much better than I do, is there no hope for a fruitless, good-for-nothing branch—no way by which it may be united to the root, and under the tender care of the Divine Husbandman?"

"There is, ma'am, there is," he answered with the characteristic energy of his countrymen. "We know from another part of Scripture that 'God is able to graff them in,' Rom. xi. 23; and sure we know from every part of it that he is willing to receive all who come to him through the Lord Jesus Christ; to blot out their sins for the sake of him who died for sinners; to sanctify their hearts by his Holy Spirit, and to make them his own dear children, giving them the Spirit of adoption whereby they may cry Abba, Father. Oh! this is the way to have peace here, and joy hereafter." Then, increasing in warmth of feeling, he continued: "It is a blessed thing, ma'am, to be under the care of Him who makes 'all things work together for good to them that love him,' Rom. viii. 28—to be united to the true vine. If you please, ma'am, I will read one passage more of God's promise to those who are so. 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto

Israel ; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon,' Hos. xiv. 4-6. Is not that fine, ma'am ? Is it not beautiful ?"

" It is indeed : but a thought has just struck me—do not all people, religious and otherwise, meet with afflictions ?"

" Assuredly, ma'am. ' There is one event to the righteous, and the wicked,' Eccl. ix. 2. ' To those who know not the Lord, sorrows are judgments ; but to those who are reconciled to him by the blood of his Son, they are but the chastisements of a loving Father.'"

The words of her humble teacher made an indelible impression upon the mind of Mrs. Norton. She had still the blessing left of a kind husband. She repeated to him this conversation, saying, as she concluded, " In short, I believe there is much more in religion than we ever thought, although we are deemed as attentive to these things as our neighbours."

Mr. Norton, pleased to find that anything had turned her thoughts from the subject of their sorrow into a new channel, replied, " I could have told you, my dear, that our new gardener was a very religious man ; and his little history is quite interesting. I had it from an old friend of mine, the Irish clergyman who recommended him to our service. He is a convert from popery ; and his sincerity has been well tested by the trials he has undergone."

" Ah !" thought Mrs. Norton, " this branch has been pruned, and brings forth fruit to the glory of the husbandman. May it be so with us ! My dear husband," she said aloud, " let us study the Bible together, and see if we too belong to God." He readily assented, though more for the purpose of keeping her mind engaged than any other ; but the blessing of Him who inspired the Scriptures attended the perusal of them : this couple soon found joy and peace in believing ; and their faith was manifested by good works, of which they gave the glory to Him who says of the branches which he prunes and waters, " From me is thy fruit found," Hosea xiv. 8.

E. F. G.

THE FATHER'S CALL.

" HARK ! Listen, sister ! Leonard, do be still one moment. I thought my father called," said a young, intelligent-looking girl, hastily laying down her work, and opening the door of the sitting-room to listen.

"I heard no call, Helen," said her sister, carelessly, "you are always interrupting one." And with redoubled vigour she turned to resume the song she was practising.

"I think it is very likely we were called," said Leonard, looking up lazily from his book, and yawning; "but it's only the governor wanting us to look at some new star that he has prevailed on to come within reach of his telescope. I shall not go, I like better to stay here and be comfortable."

"Fie, Leonard! said Helen, returning to her seat, as she heard no repetition of the supposed summons, "how can you speak so disrespectfully of our kind father? I do wish you would endeavour to have some sympathy with his tastes and pursuits. My happiest hours are spent with him in his little observatory, though I did not think I should be so fond of astronomy when I began."

"Oh, you are the pet, you know. Papa would rather have you with him than Leonard, or me," said Caroline.

"My father loves us all alike," said Helen, warmly, "but you do not enter into his love as you might; and we all owe the same obedience to his wishes. You might have patience to endure even a disagreeable study, if you would but remember the command, 'Honour thy father;' and we owe him double honour, since we have no dear mother now to share it with him."

"I am not jealous, Helen, so you need not preach. There! we are called, assuredly."

But Helen was gone; she had heard the voice, and hastened to obey. In a few moments she re-appeared, earnestly exclaiming,

"Now Leonard, now Carry! do come with me. The new telescope is fixed, and the stars are beautifully clear. Come, make haste—I have brought your warm shawl, dear Carry."

"I am not coming—I don't care for the stars, they may shine, or not, for me," said Leonard. "You go, Helen, your ideas are more celestial than mine."

"And I don't want to come shivering there either," said Caroline. "Tell papa that I am practising, and must know this piece of music for to-morrow evening."

"Well, if you are determined not to come, I must go alone again," said Helen, sorrowfully, as she retraced her steps to her father's presence.

"Can they not come?" he asked quickly.

"Leonard is reading, and Carry is practising, dear papa."

"And you, Helen?"

"Oh! I was doing nothing of any consequence; but Caroline must know her music by to-morrow; and perhaps Leonard is studying something particular."

The parent yielded to a gentle sigh, not merely because his children were uninterested in a sublime and soul-elevating study, but because they so constantly resisted his gentle efforts to attract their hearts from inferior pursuits, and some of them solely and irreclaimably "of the earth, earthy."

"Come then, Helen," he said, "and let us learn something more of the wonders of God's glorious creation. I am glad to look away from earth sometimes, physically as well as spiritually, because all things around us are stamped, more or less, with evidences of the fall, and the great moral dislocation of our species; but we are still privileged to look up, and see that 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.' Since Adam sinned, our earth never but once possessed a treasure that could adequately declare his glory."

"And that," said Helen, "was when the light of his glory shone in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Or, rather, was veiled there, my Helen, to meet without terrifying us; and it is not until we have seen how grace and truth met there, how justice and mercy mingled there, that we can intelligently and acceptably rise into the contemplation of his works, and 'praise him for his mighty acts,' and 'praise him in the firmament of his power.' In vain we gaze upon the wonders of his power, for our profit, until we have read in the face of Jesus, the wonders of his love, for our salvation. The world's philosopher gropes about God's works, if haply he may find his way to Him who made them, and glorify himself in his discoveries without the true light; but the Christian philosopher with 'the beginning of wisdom' obtains the heavenly key to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

"Do you think, papa, that the study of God's works in creation can ever bring a soul to the true knowledge of his character?"

"Assuredly not, Helen. True knowledge of God is practical. A true knowledge of God's character must produce love, and love produces conformity. An enthusiastic admirer of what is called nature may be a most unholy character; but no man ever, from the heart, studied God in Christ Jesus, without loving him, and from love aiming to be like him. 'No man cometh unto the Father, but by me,' said our Lord; 'neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to

whomsoever the Son will reveal him,' John xiv. 6; Matt. xi. 27. And when God is thus revealed in all the winning attractions of forgiving, suffering love, the pardoned sinner is raised into a position to comprehend with practical intelligence the meaning of that exhortation, 'Be ye holy; for I am holy,' 1 Pet. i. 6. 'Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,' Rom. xii. 2. A being to be feared, is the highest attainment of natural theology. A friend to be loved and imitated is the theme of sacred inspiration alone."

Thus did Helen and her father take sweet counsel together, and two hours rapidly passed away, with their two telescopes, the one revealing more of the wonders of creation, and faith penetrating deeper into the wonders of redemption.

When Helen rejoined her brother and sister, she found them tired and sleepy. Leonard had been long wearied of his book, which was a comic novel, only produced in the absence of "the governor;" and Caroline had attempted and abandoned several methods of passing the time.

"How long you have been away, Helen!" she exclaimed, peevishly. "I am sure, if you would tell the truth, you must be half dead with cold."

"I never thought about it," said Helen, cheerfully. "You would soon be interested, Carry, if you would only come and sit with us a little sometimes."

"Dear me! I am not afraid of getting through the world comfortably enough without knowing much about the stars. They were made to give us light; and while they do their duty, I shall not interfere with them."

"They were appointed to be lights, doubtless; but do you suppose they occupy no other place in the great design? Suppose, now, they are some of the 'many mansions' in the 'Father's house,' prepared for us."

"Suppose so if you please; but you *know* nothing about such things, Helen; and I wonder you like to speculate upon them."

"We *must* go somewhere," said Helen, gently; "and it was thinking about *where* that first made me anxious to know *how*; and wherever the locality may be, the only way to the happy home is by Jesus Christ, 'whom to know is life eternal.'"

"I wish my father would come and let us have prayers," said Caroline, "I am so tired."

"Your way of passing time does not seem to have been more entertaining than mine," said Helen, smiling.

"Oh! everything is tiresome when you keep to it too long. I have sung that song until I perfectly abhor the sound of it."

"She pays herself a fine compliment, does she not?" said Leonard laughing, as he hastily pocketed his book at the sound of his father's approaching footstep.

The young people knelt around their parent at family worship; but it would not be uncharitable to suppose that only one of those young hearts was in tune for the sacred privilege of prayer.

"Caroline, my darling sister," said Helen, as she kissed her tenderly on parting for the night, "will you try to like to be a little oftener with dear papa? He does wish so much to have us all with him, and he makes study so pleasant and happy."

"Oh, nonsense, Helen. If you go when he calls us, I don't think he minds about any one else."

"You mistake indeed, dear sister; and forgive me for one word more. We have a Father above, whose call must be obeyed. He accepts no excuses, and how can you be ready for his summons, if it is so troublesome to obey that of an indulgent earthly parent, so good and kind as ours?"

"Preaching again, Helen! What an incorrigible little sinner I am, not to be good, with such a persevering instructor. Now, good night; and don't distress your dear little heart about me. I'll come and do penance with you some day, soon; but as for your stars and mansions, I am not disposed to want one at present." And laughing carelessly, she closed the door upon Helen; but not until she had heard Leonard, who was just then passing to his room, remark, "Take care, Helen, lest, when she is called up there, she wants to send you instead."

"Those who are content to live without God in this world, Leonard, cannot be prepared to enjoy his presence in a better one," said Helen.

"You will mope yourself to death, sister, if you are always thinking about it. Do leave such melancholy subjects to the good old people who are just going to benefit by them, and be merry like Carry and me."

"I did not think you seemed so very merry when I came down from the observatory this evening," said Helen, archly, as her gay brother disappeared, laughing, and humming a tune.

It was not long afterwards that sickness entered the family,

and Caroline was prostrated in malignant fever. The physician feared that it would terminate fatally ; and the unhappy girl, on learning how faint were the hopes of recovery, became frantic with despair, distressing all who approached her or ministered to her, by her undisguised dread of God and of eternity.

"Oh, Helen!" she cried, "I cannot die; I am not fit to die. Oh! pray for me, that I may not die yet. Is there not something about a 'prayer that availeth much?' Cannot you pray that prayer for me, sister? I shall never ridicule your religion again."

Helen did pray, and between the fits of delirium she whispered the invitations of a Saviour's love, and told of the blood that cleanseth from all sin, and the mercy that suffered the dying penitent to be with Jesus in paradise. But in vain—the sufferer declared that she had never sought congeniality with God, and that his presence could only condemn and terrify her. She had said practically to the Almighty, "Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways;" and now she stood helpless and wretched, and a stranger, at the threshold of eternity.

For many days and nights her friends watched anxiously for some gleam of light, in answer to their prayers; and suddenly a marked change took place physically. The fever abated, the crisis was passed; and she was soon pronounced out of danger.

"Now she will have time, dear papa," said the thankful Helen; "this illness will not have been in vain."

"Helen," said Caroline, the first time she was able to sit up for a little, "it is so delightful to think of getting well again, and to get rid of such frightful thoughts as those which haunted me. I suppose I was often delirious."

"You seemed afraid to die, dear Carry. Will you try to live so that you need never have such fears again?"

"Oh yes! I shall be more serious now. I must try to be good, like you, Helen."

"It is only Jesus who can take the sting from death," said Helen. "You felt the pain of unpardoned sin, because you had not sought forgiveness through him; nor learned, that in him, to all who believe, that our God is a loving Father, and not a condemning judge. You must look to him, dear sister, both for life and death, for only his gracious Spirit can enable you to say, 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,' and whether you 'live or die,' that you are 'the Lord's,'" Phil. i. 21; Rom. xiv. 8.

"Do you feel so, Helen?" asked Caroline.

Helen did not answer. Her head had sunk upon her sister's pillow, and Caroline soon perceived that she was insensible. In great alarm she rang for assistance, and though Helen soon rallied in some degree, it was evident that she was ill. Her father thought that she was over fatigued by constant attendance upon her sister, and would soon be restored, but not so; the fever was upon her; and in a few hours she was for some time unconscious of all around her.

The physician, who had been surprised and pleased by Caroline's unexpected recovery, would not now give any decided opinion: and the parent felt, that the same love which had spared the one would now transplant the other. "She has long been a blooming flower," he thought, "and her heavenly Father will have her home, and she will be spared the blights and storms of this present evil world for ever."

But it was very hard to part with the precious child who had become his constant companion and friend, and whose filial attention and love had been the chief solace of his widowhood. And he asked meekly for her life, if so it seemed good in his Father's sight; but if not, well! for there is in true Christianity, notwithstanding the short comings and failures of many who are on the foundation, a strong manly vigour which does oftentimes strike down human selfishness, and triumph even over the yearnings of natural affection.

When Caroline was permitted to visit her sister's bedside, she was passionately excited at the change she witnessed. Helen lay there so pale and still, her hand was in that of her father, and she was then quite conscious. There had been nothing in her delirium to distress or pain those who watched over her; all was peaceful and serene, and no expression that angels might not hear had passed her lips.

"Oh papa," said Caroline. "Is she better? is there not some hope?"

"Dear Carry," said Helen, "God can restore me to health if he please; but it is thought that it is not his will. You must not grieve, for it is all well."

"Oh no, no; I cannot part with you; it must not be. O papa, pray. Can no one pray for her as she prayed for me? God will be merciful to us again."

"My sister," said Helen, exerting her little strength, "you do not know all my prayer. You were not willing to die, you were not ready; and I asked, that if it might not be contrary to God's will and glory, he would take me instead of

you, for I am willing. And oh, papa!" she said, turning with animation to look in the face of her father, "is it presumption to add that, through the love and grace and pity of Jesus, I am ready?"

"No, dearest child, it is not presumption, for it is by the grace of God that you are what you are; and why should you not declare his work within you, giving the praise where alone it is due?"

"It is my heavenly Father who calls, dear sister, and I have often realized his presence by faith; I go now to enjoy it by sight; you, too, must be ready when he calls again."

Poor Caroline, in frantic grief, was compelled to leave the room; but her father remained to whisper in the ear of his dying child the sweet promises with which a Saviour's love has illumined the dark valley.

That night wore away, and twilight dawned through the window which looked towards the east. Helen faintly signified her wish to have the curtains drawn aside, that she might see the first blush of sunrise over the distant hills.

The watchful nurse had perceived a change; and presently Caroline stole into the room, and knelt down by the bedside. Leonard soon followed; and Helen smiled sweetly as she took a hand of each and placed them in their father's. "Be very careful of him, dear brother, dear sister, regard his wishes, be often with him, and sometimes talk of me, waiting for you in heaven. Do not let him miss me much, for he is willing to transfer me to the only dearer Friend, the only happier presence. Yes, I go; my Father calls," she continued slowly, at intervals, as the sun rose gradually above the hill. "See, see the sun! it is morning—no night for me any more for ever! The Sun of righteousness shines over me with healing in his wings. The Lamb as it had been slain, my only trust, now peace—joy—glory!" and gently the half-raised head fell back on her father's bosom, and the happy spirit passed away to that presence where is "fulness of joy for evermore."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," said the bereaved parent. Yea, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight;" and kneeling between his sobbing, mourning children, he prayed that he and they might die the death of the righteous, and their last end be like hers—"peace, joy, glory;" "more than conqueror, through Him who loved her."

B. T.

THE WIND AND THE CLOUDS.

THE husbandman is proverbially dependent on the changes of the atmosphere, and if he would be successful, he must have an eye to them in all his labours. He would be deemed mad were he to go forth to sow when it was blowing a hurricane, or to reap in the midst of drenching rain. But it is quite possible for him to err on the side of over-caution. If you saw him at seed-time, morning after morning, anxiously observing the wind, and finding that a breeze was stirring, which he thought might rise still higher and blow away his seed, putting off his sowing till at length the seed-time was over; or if you saw him in harvest "regarding the clouds," leaving day after day to commence his reaping, lest the rain should descend in the middle of it, you would say, "That man's harvest will be very scanty, if, indeed, he reap anything at all." And so said the author of the book of Ecclesiastes some two thousand years ago and more: "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap," Eccl. xi. 4.

The wise man did not say that so much for the sake of the husbandman, as for the sake of those who are engaged in works of duty and benevolence. He who would do good to others, and especially he who would seek the highest good, their salvation, must expect to encounter difficulties. Seldom, indeed, has anything extensively beneficial been accomplished against which many difficulties did not arise, both in its commencement and its course. There has, for instance, been devised a plan for relieving some form of suffering, or overcoming some dreadful evil, or effecting some obvious good; but when it was mentioned to those from whom countenance and aid were expected, they did not see the thing to be desirable, or they thought it impracticable, or they did not think the means adapted which were proposed for its accomplishment. There might be actual opposition, and there might besides be great difficulty in obtaining the needful resources. Very likely the parties whose benefit was sought, were found when approached to be indifferent or perverse. Now, whilst in such circumstances there are some who would rush headlong forward, never staying for a moment to count the cost; and never taking the trouble to inquire whether they had nerve or resources to meet the difficulties which stood in their path; there are others who would just sit down and do nothing. They would do great things if all were favourable. If cir-

circumstances would only arise completely to their mind, they would toil with an energy which should command the admiration of the world, and which should effect unheard of wonders. But they will wait till then. The time for effort consequently passes away ; many really golden opportunities of usefulness are neglected ; and there is at the same time exerted on those who observe them all the evil influence of a defective example. Perhaps some of our readers, though not conscious of this disposition to the full extent which has been described, may yet have felt—may be feeling at this moment—a disposition to yield to difficulties, and to be deterred by them from the prosecution of some work of Christian usefulness, which demands the consecration of their energies. We ask the attention of such to a few thoughts which may tend to stimulate and encourage them.

These very difficulties have their use. When they are rightly met they brace and strengthen the moral man. Who is it that is physically strong? The man who shrinks from effort? who shuts himself up from the wind? who is always in fear lest he should overtask his strength? Is it not rather he who breasts the hill and faces the storm, and bids defiance to the rudest blasts which sweep the wintry sky? What is that character worth which never aroused itself to effort, and which never exercised a thought as to how an obstacle should be overcome, but has always yielded at the least distant approach of difficulty? No doubt God placed us in the midst of difficulties in the prosecution of our efforts for the good of others, in part, at least, that we might be blessed ourselves ; that our faith might be proved ; that our zeal might be tested ; that our determination might be confirmed ; that we might learn lessons of forbearance and patience towards those who oppose us, or refuse their co-operation ; and that we might be stimulated to more earnest and persevering prayer.

We may learn something from men of the world. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." See what enterprise has done in business ! There are men who are now rolling in wealth who began the world with nothing ; and some may perhaps suppose that their course has been one of continued and easy progress, that fortune has always smiled on them, and that all along they have been favoured by the rarest combinations of propitious circumstances. Nothing of the kind. Ask them ; or ask those who have known them from the commencement of their history. They will tell you, most of them at least, that they had their

difficulties, and great ones too, but that they determined to surmount them. There were winds which, if they had observed, they had never sown; and clouds which, if they had regarded, they had never reaped. Read history. The men whose names will be handed down to the remotest ages of the world; the men who have achieved for themselves a wide-spread empire, or who have otherwise rendered themselves distinguished, are not the men who observed the winds and regarded the clouds, but the men who continued their work in spite of them, and accomplished it. We may learn much in this respect from mere men of the world, and learn it that we may practise the lesson in the promotion of the interests of the truths and the salvation of men.

But there is an array of nobler men than these—men who toiled in that cause to which every Christian is pledged, into whose labours we have entered, and whose example we are enjoined to imitate. We are to be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Look at the apostle Paul. Had he no difficulties, no winds which he might have observed, no clouds which he might have regarded? There stood arrayed before him contempt and loss; the contempt of those whose approval he had been most accustomed to prize, and the loss of whatever he had held most dear. There were deserts to be crossed, and seas to be traversed, watchings to be maintained, perils to be encountered, chains to be worn, and death to be braved. Yet he could say, "None of these things move me;" and he went forth, sowing wide that seed which is germinating still, and which will bear its fruit as long as the world shall last! Look at Martin Luther, "the solitary monk who shook the world!" The most powerful princes of the empire, and the might of the popedom, were all opposed to him; yet still he held on his way. "They will burn you, and reduce your body to ashes, as they did John Huss," said some, when he was journeying to Worms. "Though they should kindle a fire all the way," said he, "from Worms to Wittenberg, the flames of which reached to heaven, I would walk through it all the way." See how those intrepid men, Whitfield and Wesley, stood forth for the accomplishment of that second reformation, the arousing of a slumbering church. Had they been men to be deterred by difficulty, they would soon have given up their work; but, strong in a deep sense of duty, and strong in the grace of God, they still urged on their way, and England is yet reaping the fruit of their labours. Now, whilst we are to learn from every

one who presents to us in his character anything that deserves our imitation, we are to be especially observant of those whom God himself has commended as our examples; and though it be but at a distance, and with most unequal steps, that we follow them, still in those humbler spheres of Christian effort in which God has placed us we should endeavour to emulate their devotedness and zeal.

We should also keep prominently in view the greatness of our aims. What is it that the Christian philanthropist seeks? Just simply to get men to think as he thinks? to enrol them in his party? to secure their aid in the promotion of selfish designs of his own? No. His purpose is to serve them, to conduct them to the cross, that their guilt may be cancelled, and that there may be renewed in them that image of God which was obliterated in the fall. He seeks to repair the ruin of this sin-disordered world—to make it, in fact, as well as by right, the empire of Emmanuel, and to gather from it a multitude which no man can number who shall praise him for ever in heaven. They ought to be great difficulties, indeed, which should be permitted to interfere with the prosecution of aims so lofty, so sublimely benevolent as these.

And we should be familiar with the motives which God has presented to diligent, faithful labour. The husbandry in which the Christian toils is God's, and he has promised him strength to do the work which is entrusted to his hand, grace which shall keep alive his faith and quicken his zeal, and wisdom which shall direct him in all his course. He was promised, too, *success*. He has sent us to nature itself for our encouragement, and has told us in the beautiful language of prophecy, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void." And in the less adorned, yet not less cheering language of the apostle, "Paul planted; Apollos watered; God gave the increase." And he has also promised us *reward*: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." If we could keep these things always in view, we should lose sight of many difficulties which are now deemed most formidable, and which may even be permitted to keep us back from our work. We should sow regardless of the wind, and have no thought to expend on the gathering of the clouds, except

it were to inspire us with redoubled energy, lest something should arise which should positively forbid the continuance of our toil, or we be removed from it by the hand of death.

Every earnest labourer for God, the Christian parent, the sabbath-school teacher, the pastor, or the man who has to contend for great principles involving the honour of Christ and the happiness of his fellow-men, must expect to encounter difficulties. But there are considerations which should inspire him with the resolve, instead of yielding to discouragement, and folding his hands in despair, to grapple with them, and still in spite of them to continue his work. So occupying well that portion of the great field of Christian effort in which God has placed him, and sowing widely and diligently the good seed of the kingdom, he may expect, that though he may often have to sow in tears he shall ultimately reap in joy.

S. G.

WALTER WIGLEY; OR, THE FISHERMAN.

“EVERY one whom God has instructed, whatever may be his calling, may become a ‘fisher of men,’ not by setting up himself as a guide, but simply by telling others of his heavenly Father’s goodness to him, and by living a life of meekness, faith, and usefulness, as becometh a follower of the Redeemer.” Such were the words of Walter Wigley—words which many might commit to memory with great profit.

Walter Wigley was a fisherman, and won his bread from the river. He fished when he was a boy, and he fished when he was a man. He was at home at worm-fishing, fly-fishing, and net-fishing, and well knew the proper baits for the finny tribe. I have watched him on the river’s side, in his wicker coracle, and in his boat, and I never saw a more skilful fisherman.

But Walter Wigley’s knowledge was not confined to fishing, for he knew much of the heart of man. For a time he went to the whale fishery, both in the north and south; for a time he mingled with the busy world in a city, and then returned to his native village, to his old employment of fishing, and the management of the ferry-boat, where he lost no opportunity of doing good. Many a stranger has had good reason to remember being ferried over the river by Walter Wigley.

Walter Wigley was a lover of his Bible, and had mercifully been taught to know Him, whom to know is life eternal. This was plain to me the first time he ever put me across the river in his boat. “What baits do you use in fishing?” said I.

"That," replied he, "depends altogether on the sort of fish I mean to fry; different fish require different baits. It is of little use, sir, to bait your hook with a Bible, if you are fishing in a public-house."

There was something so odd, so striking, and withal so true, in this remark, that during my visit near the village I was led to become better acquainted with Walter Wigley. It was then that I saw him on the river's side, in his wicker 'coracle,' and in his boat fishing; and it was then, on a summer's evening in July, while sitting with him in his boat, that he gave me the following narration.

"When I was a lad, sir, fishing was my hobby, and as I was to get my bread by it, it happened all well. He who has no love for his calling is not likely to make it answer. My parents were very kind to me.

"My father had the care of the ferry-boat, which enabled him to pick up a trifle now and then; for though a penny was not much for putting a passenger across the river, yet on market days sometimes six or eight together used to get into the boat, and now and then a stranger coming across the country would give him a piece of silver, instead of a copper penny. There is a deal of difference, sir, among people, in money matters; some cannot part with a penny without it being a trouble to them, while others know not how to keep a sixpence in their pockets.

"As soon as I could row with an oar, or push with a pole, my father brought me up to help him; and as he grew weaker and I grew stronger, the boat was at last left pretty much to my management, assisted by my brother. We had two boats at the ferry, one for foot passengers, and another called the horse-boat, much larger, for putting across horses, gigs, and wagons. The light-boat was a light affair, but to put the horse-boat across the water in winter time when the river was swollen, the weather cold, and the current rapid, required much strength and a great deal of patience.

"As it was necessary to be always within hearing when any one called out for the boat, so mine would have been an idle life, in sitting and lounging about, and waiting for passengers, had I not been fond of fishing. The making of nets, lines, fishing-rods, and artificial flies, together with my practice of fishing, both above and below the ferry, within hail, filled up my time, and kept me from idleness, and no doubt from mischief, to which I was sadly much inclined.

"One day, just as I had taken a trout from the water, a

stranger dressed in a rough jacket, blunt and off-hand in his speech, came up to be ferried over the water. He smiled with a curl of his upper lip at the fish I had caught, and said, Such sport might do very well for children, but it was not fit for a man to follow. 'Come with me,' said he, 'and I will show you something like sport. When a man knows how to tackle a fish as big as three or four of your horse-boats he has something to talk about.'

"At the moment, I was mightily taken with the stranger, who, before we parted, told me that he belonged to a Hull whaler, and that he should be back again that way in a week or two. For that week or two I thought of little else than whale-catching. I have, somewhere, met with the verse—

'Thy heart's a house, oh, guard it well,
Top, bottom, sides, and centre,
And lock, and bolt, and bar the door,
That Bad-thought may not enter.'

"As I had taken no care to guard my heart, no wonder that Bad-thought entered it. I made up my mind to leave my father and my brother to manage the ferry-boat, as well as they could, and to join the stranger on his return. This I did, and had many a heart-ache for my pains. Oh, it is a bitter thing to know that you have turned your back upon your parents, just when they stood in most need of your help!

"I soon found that my new companion was a thoughtless, reckless man. He led me into much evil, and would willingly have led me into more; yet, having once joined him, I did not like to draw back. We went in the same whaler, the 'Mary Anne,' to Baffin's Bay.

"Unused as I had been to the sea, young, active, and fond of anything new, as I was, I soon became a good sailor; and at the fishery acquitted myself so well, that even the old hands did not despise me. My companions were a sad lawless set, with only one among them of a different character; him I shall never forget. His name was Martin Rann.

"The practice of whalers, when they are once on a good station for fishing, is to keep their boats ready for service. They are slung at the sides of the ship with the necessary instruments on board, so that they can be lowered any time, at a minute's warning. If whalers were as watchful for God's providences as they are for fish, and if, when they saw them, they were as anxious to turn them to account, they would be a different sort of men to what they are.

" One day, when it was colder than common, the master was looking out sharply from the crow's nest ; but may be you do not know what a crow's nest, on board a whaler, is, so I will tell you. A crow's nest is a sort of snug berth, or watch tower, at the main-top mast, in which the master of the ship, or a trusty hand, keeps a look-out for fish, having with him a good glass to see through. Well, as I said, he was up at the crow's nest ; and not long after, he spied a whale astern, and gave the word to the watch on deck.

" Few men have more reason to live in continual dependence on God than whalers have, for very few men go through greater dangers, and yet they are among the most reckless on the earth, having very little fear of either God or man.

" A fish seldom stops up to blow longer than a minute or two, and then down it goes for ten minutes, or more, before it rises again. The crew of the boat, who had left the ship, soon harpooned the whale ; but as it went down again directly at a great rate, a man held up an oar, as a signal, that another line or two might be wanted. The boat in which Martin Rann and I were rowing together was soon at the spot.

" The fish came up just astern of our boat, and began, as wounded whales always do, to spout, and to lash the water with their tails. One stroke of the monster striking our stern sent me, as I sat at the head of it, flying up into the air ; down I came on the edge of the boat, which had righted again, and fell into the water. Being altogether disabled, I should have been drowned, but Martin Rann, or rather the mighty Maker of the earth and sea, by the hands of Martin Rann, saved me.

" My fishing for some time was ended ; but though I lay idle, that accident was the best thing that ever happened to me. Martin Rann was a friend indeed to me. With a kind and Christian heart in his bosom, and God's holy word on his knees, he sat beside me by the hour, winning me over by his faithfulness, his meekness, and his kindness, to holy things. It is my belief, sir, that every man that God has instructed, whatever may be his calling, may become a ' fisher of men,' not by setting up himself as a guide, but simply by telling others of his heavenly Father's goodness to him, and by leading a life of meekness, faith, and usefulness, as becometh a follower of the Redeemer.

" It is a sad trouble, sir, to one who fears God, to live in the midst of ungodly men ; and as I recovered my strength, I

fell into sinful backslidings. I could not stand up against the jeers of my boisterous companions, and had not Martin Rann been at my elbow, I might have left them all behind me in impiety and sin. How it was that Martin himself held on his Christian course I could not then make out, though, since it has been made clear enough to me: he was sustained by God's grace, and, meek as he was, I verily believe that he would sooner have been harpooned like a whale, than have joined them in their ungodly ways.

"Martin Rann never gave me up, though for a time I was sinfully ungrateful to him. He went with me to the fishery in the south, and afterwards we were together in London, in which city he died in peace, in humble but steadfast hope of eternal life through Him who alone could save him—even Jesus Christ. Much did I learn from Martin Rann, and much did I love him, for he was the means of saving my life at the whale fishery, and of bringing me to God.

"Since my return, sir, to my native village, I have tried, looking up for help, to do as he did: not to think of myself more highly than I ought to think; but to live humbly and peacefully, telling both my neighbours and such strangers as have crossed the river, when I thought I could do so without offence or presumption, of God's goodness to Walter Wigley."

I listened with much interest to the account given me by the fisherman, and became fully convinced of the truth of his favourite remark, especially as it was illustrated by his example.

G. M.

"YOU ARE GOING THE WRONG ROAD."

ABOUT twenty years ago, on a sabbath-day afternoon, going from the village of K— to the neighbouring town S— for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, I met a young man and his companion at a spot about half way between the above two places: they were taking a walk into the country. I had seen the young man before, and thought he should not then have been wandering from his place and from the house of God; therefore, on meeting him, I spoke to him in a few words with solemnity and firmness, and ended by saying, "Be sure you are going the wrong road."

The circumstance passed away from my own remembrance, and I was unaware that any special good attended or followed it. But special good did result from the occurrence, and it

abundantly came to light afterwards. The words "Be sure you are going the wrong road," by the grace of the Holy Spirit, went to the conscience with power. The first rising emotion was one of extreme displeasure, as my friend afterwards acknowledged, so that he would have killed me if he durst. The anger however subsided, and the conviction remained, which led him more frequently and constantly to the house of God, where increasing light shone upon his mind, and the truth of the gospel with power penetrated and filled his heart. He openly declared himself on the Lord's side, acknowledging what he had done for his soul; he taught in the sabbath-school, and often addressed the children with considerable acceptance; his zeal led him into the neighbouring villages, and he was ever after a faithful and successful servant of Jesus Christ. What hath God wrought? It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes—to him be all the glory and everlasting praise.

Does not this narrative speak forcibly to the Christian, saying; As therefore you have opportunity, do good, witnessing for God, for truth, and for souls continually. Good effects, happy results, may not be immediately seen; as Scott says, "We should not deem those expectations frustrated which are not immediately answered; nor that seed of the word thrown away which does not immediately spring up, as the most negligent and forgetful may hereafter remember and be humbled for their present inattention."

But, dear reader, permit me to make an appeal to your conscience concerning your own present course and your everlasting prospects, and may God by his Holy Spirit make it effectual for your spiritual and eternal good.

Are you a sabbath breaker? If so, certainly *you are* going the wrong road. The law of the Lord says, "Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy." "Blessed is the man that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it." Alas! multitudes have come to a miserable end by their forgetfulness of, and disobedience to, this Divine command.

Are you a neglecter of the house, and the worship, and the word of the Lord? Then assuredly "*you are* going the wrong road." He that saith "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gate, waiting at the posts of my doors; hear, and your soul shall live," says also, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish!" and "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Dear readers, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of

some is." Hasten to the house of the Lord, join in his worship with a contrite and believing heart, and hearken to his word; this is the good and the right way; walk in it, and here and hereafter you will find rest unto your souls.

To impenitent, unbelieving sinners, of every grade, and class, and case, I broadly declare, "You are all going the wrong road." The vicious, the profligate, the self-righteous Pharisee, and the hypocrite, are all going the wrong road, and persevering therein will undoubtedly arrive at an awful end; for "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8.

"There is a path that leads to God:

All others go astray;
Narrow, but pleasant is the road,
And Christians love the way.

"It leads straight through this world of sin,
And dangers must be past;
But those who boldly walk therein,
Will come to heaven at last.

"While the broad road, where thousands go,
Lies near, and opens fair;
And many turn aside, I know,
And walk with sinners there."

J. M.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

DEAR READER,—“Search the Scriptures,” John v. 39. They are “given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,” 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

They describe man as originally formed in the image of his Creator, Gen. i. 27; his mind endued with knowledge, Col. iii. 10; his will upright, Eccl. vii. 29; his affections holy, Eph. iv. 23, 24; his conscience pure; a stranger to guilt, shame, and fear, Gen. ii. 16—25; as conversing with God, Gen. ii. and iii.; as innocent, and therefore happy, Gen. ii. 25, till the disobedience of our first parents involved them and their posterity in sin and misery, Rom. v. 12.

The Bible represents man after this transgression as shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, Ps. li. 5; his understanding dark, Eph. vi. 18; his will depraved, 1 Pet. iv. 3; his affections earthly, Phil. iii. 19; alienated from God, Eph. iv. 18;

and under the sentence of a broken law, Rom. iv. 15, which can be satisfied with nothing short of perfect and sinless obedience, Gal. iii. 10; James ii. 10. But though by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, yet by the obedience of One it pleased God to make many righteous, Rom. v. 19.

In the Bible is recorded the gospel, which discovers how sin may be pardoned consistently with Divine justice, Rom. iii. 26, and man be made holy and happy through Christ, by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit upon his soul, Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 9; 2 Pet. i. 4—6. It reveals a Saviour, as "wisdom" to the ignorant, "righteousness" to the guilty, "sanctification" to the polluted, and "redemption" to the captive, 1 Cor. i. 30. Him hath God exalted "to give repentance and forgiveness of sins," through faith in his atoning blood and perfect righteousness," Acts v. 31.

Reader, beseech the Holy Spirit to convince you of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," John xvi. 7—9; Rom. vii. 13, and flee for refuge to the hope which your Bible sets before you, Heb. vi. 1. See that you "adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things," Titus ii. 10; for you are not your own, but bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 20; let the "love of Christ," therefore, "constrain you" to the faithful discharge of every personal and relative duty, 2 Cor. v. 14. Read your Bible daily, Ps. cxix. 97; Col. iii. 16. It will teach you to make the love of God the principle, 1 John iii.; 1 Cor. ix. 3; his word the rule, Ps. cxix. 11, 105; and his glory the end of all your actions, 1 Cor. x. 31. Its truths will be a sovereign remedy for all your evils in life, Rom. viii. 31—39; they will deprive death of its sting, 1 Cor. xv. 55—57; and give you a well-founded hope of happiness beyond the grave, Ps. xvii. 15.

As a proof of the sincerity of your religious profession, the Bible commands you to be instant in prayer, Rom. xii. 12; humble in your general conduct, Col. iii. 12; respectful to your superiors, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, 17; kind to your equals, 1 Pet. iii. 8; and condescending to your inferiors, Rom. xii. 16. It requires you to overcome evil with good, Rom. xii. 21; to be merciful, Matt. v. 7; just, Mic. vi. 8; temperate, 2 Pet. i. 6; pure, Matt. v. 8; peaceable, Matt. v. 9; patient, 2 Pet. i. 6; thankful, Col. iii. 15; and resigned, Job i. 21; to mortify your corrupt affections, Rom. viii. 13; Col. iii. 5—10; and to aim at universal obedience in thought, word, and deed, Matt. v. 48. Yet forget not, reader, that, although you cannot perform religious duties with too much diligence, you

can never place too little reliance on them, Luke xvii. 10; Isa. lxi. 6; for the Bible affirms the atoning blood of Christ to be the only ground of your reconciliation to God, Rom. v. 10; Eph. ii. 13; and his perfect righteousness your only title to heaven. For everything let your requests be made known unto God, by prayer and supplication. See Phil. iv. 6; Eph. vi. 18; James iv. 2, 3; Matt. xxi. 22; John xvi. 23, 24.*

PRECIOUS BIBLE! WHAT A TREASURE!

OBITUARY OF THE LATE WILLIAM FREEMAN LLOYD, ESQ.

BY OLD HUMPHREY.

AND is it for me, who have more years graven on my brow than the departed friend now so generally lamented, had on his—is it for me to dip my pen into my inkhorn, and write aught respecting him by way of obituary? Even so. Years are as days in the sight of the High and Lofty One. He taketh from the world, and leaveth, according to his good pleasure. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord,” Job i. 21.

Few persons interested in the well-being of young people and of Sunday-schools can be strangers to the name of William Freeman Lloyd. It is familiar to multitudes now, and will be handed down in the list of British philanthropists to future times.

Many pens have already touched on the prominent points in the life of the departed. They have made known to those who knew it not, that Mr. Lloyd was born at Uley, in Gloucestershire, December, 22, 1791, and died at Stanley Hall, in the same county, April 22, 1853. That he lost his parents, who were pious, at an early period of his life. That when a mere boy he became a Sunday-school teacher. That in the year 1810 he accepted the office of secretary of the Sunday School Union; and that about the year 1816 commenced his influential connexion with the Religious Tract Society, which has only now been terminated by the loving invitation of his heavenly Father, “Come up hither.”

Kindness was conspicuous in his character. True, he had no tenderness for evil, but willingly would have crushed it with an iron hand; neither had he flattering words for the ears of his friends, however highly he might regard them; but still kindness of heart mingled largely with a pervading

* Carefully examine all the texts of Scripture referred to.

spirit of integrity. As I have elsewhere said, of my frequent meeting and communications with him I cannot speak too freely, nor too gratefully. It was really a holiday to have an appointment with him. While walking out together, his love of nature, and kindly feeling for the young and old, were fully manifested; and when seated together, within doors, at our manifold manuscripts, there was in him a sunny cheerfulness that relieved the ennui of literary labour; a liberality that called forth a desire to be liberal in return; and a tenderness and delicacy on shadowy and debatable points, that much endeared him to me. His expositions of Holy Scriptures were always enjoyed by me,

“ And much I loved his voice to hear
In sweet and solemn praise and prayer.”

The following quotation of the “Jubilee Memorial of the Religious Tract Society” sums up in a much better way than I am able to do it, the qualifications of the departed.

“There was a combination of excellences in Mr. Lloyd that qualified him for the varied and important duties he was led to undertake. His thorough knowledge of business enabled him to render efficient help in all the Society’s transactions; his literary taste and habits qualified him to superintend its editorial department; whilst his eminent piety, unobtrusive manners, and sound judgment, led the Committee to place great dependence on his counsels, and zealously to promote his well digested plans for the great designs of the institution.”

As no one can foster his memory with more respect and affection than myself, so I feel the more at liberty to speak with friendly freedom of his literary productions. While his suggested works, compilations, plans for periodicals, editorial labours, revisions, and corrections were of the most important kind, his original works are remarkable neither for their number nor extent; but rather for their adaptation to the objects they were meant to serve: in this they were both happy and eminently successful. The character of his authorship may be said to be humble. He never attempted the princely prodigality of words, in which some indulge when setting forth the affections of the heart, the beauties of creation, and the praises of the High and Lofty One. His prose never aims at any other ends than utility and piety; and, so far as verse is concerned, he may be said rather to have availed himself of the usefulness of rhyme, than to have felt the inspiration of poetry. In a word, while his literary tact was

unquestionably more in requisition than his talent, his desire to be useful was immeasurably ahead of his love of popularity. Much rather would he have written the hymns of Watts, than the Iliad of Homer. In making these remarks, I feel a touch of something like compunction, as though I had taken a liberty with one of whom I can hardly speak too highly, and whose memory I delight to honour.

Some years ago Mr. Lloyd, on account of ill-health, retired to Gloucestershire; and during an agreeable visit that I made there last summer, I drove out almost every day with him in his little four-wheeled carriage. We were together at many of the surrounding villages, visiting the schools. In these drives he became more than usually confidential, and spoke with much affection of those with whom he was living, and of those who had been associated with him in Paternoster-row. Much did he win upon my regard. We were to have driven out together this summer, but better things were prepared for him; I was to remain a little longer a pilgrim on the earth, and he was to enter the city with the golden gates.

Though somewhat sudden at the last, it can hardly be said that his removal was unexpected, as his health had latterly very visibly declined. It was manifest that the silver cord was about to be loosed, and the golden bowl to be broken. Four times in one day he fell down through extreme weakness: he was then carried up to his bed, which he never left. After disturbed sleep, occasioned in part by opiates taken to soothe pain, he became speechless; and at last entered peaceably into his rest. The pitcher at the fountain, and the wheel at the cistern were broken. The body had ceased to suffer, and the enfranchised spirit returned unto God who gave it.

Among other sentences which fell from his lips before death were the following:—"I have been a poor, unprofitable servant; but I have had a good Master." "No more sin, no more sorrow." "But I may not dwell on particulars. He is gone, and we must try to forget the suffering through which he passed, in the remembrance that a good man, through Divine grace, is gone to glory.

My heart is pleading to bring forth more prominently his Christian qualities, and his Christian services, but I am repressed by the remembrance of the unobtrusiveness and retiredness of his character. It is better to say too little than too much. Enough, that he died in the faith, steadfastly relying on the merits and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Knowing somewhat of his worth, and having greatly experienced the advantage of his society, I feel his loss; but, believing as I do that he has entered into the joy of his Lord, I rejoice. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," is a commendation that involves many a hard battle with self, great humility of mind, continual prayer and strivings for the gracious influences of God's Holy Spirit. Through these he has passed, and doubtless is now with Him in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

In one of his drawers was a packet of original rhymes and verses, with the desire written thereon, that, should another edition of one of his works be required, it should first pass through my hands. The first verse of the packet is the following, as if anticipatory of his approaching end:

"Jesus! my dying head shall rest
On thy still tender, pierced breast:
To thee I yield my latest breath,
And share thy triumph over death."

Long will he be affectionately remembered by others, as well as by myself. As I sit in my study I have within view his likeness, letters written by his pen, books of which he was the author, and volumes presented me by his hand. And that old truth-teller, that ancient, curiously wrought repeater, which has so often been a monitor to him in the midnight hour, now ticks beside my bed at midday and midnight, pronouncing as audibly as a time-piece can pronounce the words, "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh," Matt. xxiv. 44.

It was his desire, written down with his pen, with an eternal world full in view, that, should any inscription be raised to his memory, it should not contain any "flattering eulogies." Be it so. Let him be affectionately remembered, according to his wishes, as one enabled "by Divine grace to promote the religious instruction of the young and the poor."

"Unhallow'd incense shall not rise
Where Death has triumph'd o'er his doom;
Nor Flattery fling her vanities
O'er the pale tenant of the tomb.

"With heavenly aid, we hope and trust
To follow where his steps have trod;
And leave his body in the dust,
Believing that he is with God."



OLD HUMPHREY'S MAP OF THE HIGHLANDS.

THE other day I was looking over my tattered and torn map of the Highlands of Scotland, that I might recall some of the scenes which had yielded me so much of deep interest and awful delight, when wandering over the vast, the sterile, the lonely, and the sublime regions of Caledonia.

The rocky heights, the glens profound,
The forest, moor, and swampy ground;
And cloudy mists that rise and roll,
With solemn thoughts impress the soul.

I am, however, not about to speak of Scotland, or of her mountains and glens, but only to make a few remarks on my map of the Highlands.

Truly the map was in a sad dilapidated state; for to say nothing of the blots and blurs which had rooted out the remaining trees in the forest of Atholl, filled up Loch Laggan, and well nigh removed Ben Cruachan from Argyleshire forever—to say nothing of these serious disfigurements, one disastrous rent had divided Perthshire into two parts; while another had separated Inveruglas from Inverary, Aberfoyle from the Trosachs, and the Frith of Forth from Kinross and Loch Leven.

But sad as it was to see my poor map in so ruinous a state, it could hardly be expected to be otherwise, considering the use which had been made of it; for every day of my wandering, and almost every hour, it had been unfolded and folded many times for my benefit and instruction. Had you accompanied me in my Scottish tour, you might have seen me poring over it in Perth, Glasgow, Stirling, and "Auld Reekie," on Arthur's seat, and at the foot of the Grampians, by the side of Loch Lomond, and at the slate quarries of Ballahulish, at the bottom of Glentilt, and the top of Ben-y-gloe, in the Pass of Killiecrankie, and the Castle of Dunstaffnage, at the Isle of Staffa, and the Falls of the Tummel. Wherever I happened to be, I failed not to consult my map, hardly moving from one single place to another without seeking the information so liberally afforded me.

"But how is it," thought I, while looking over my tattered map, "that this should be so much worn in a single month, while my Bible, which I have had so many years, is in good repair?" This was a home thrust that I could not parry—a question to which I felt bound to reply. It was in vain to reason that I had carried the map in my pocket, often opened it in a hurry, and used it carelessly; for after making every allowance for these things, and considering the subject in every point of view, this conclusion was unavoidable, that I had, comparatively, used my map much, and my Bible but little.

True it is that when roaming in the Highlands, I had heights to attain, valleys to traverse, and swamps to clear, and therefore required all the assistance I could get from my map; but are there not enough of these things in life to drive a man to his Bible? What earthly height is to be compared with the heaven that through mercy we hope to attain? What valleys are like those of humiliation and the shadow of death? and what swamps can be set against those of temptation and sin? Why, we have not only need to consult our Bibles, but to study them, to pray over them, and to weep over them, through every stage of our pilgrimage. Had I used my Bible, during the years it had been in my possession, with half the energy and perseverance manifested by me in using my map, I must have been a wiser, and, I think, a much better man.

But now to the question that I wish to propose. Is there a book in the world that you read more than your Bible? There are many good books, but none so good as God's holy word; many glorious aspirations of men, but none so glorious as the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Let my question be fairly

answered. Were I speaking to sportsmen, I would say, try your betting-books; but as sportsmen do not usually trouble themselves much about the Bible, we will pass them by. Merchants, try your bank-books. Tradesmen, your day-books and your ledgers. Christians, your Leightons and your Scotts; your Fletchers and your Flavels; your Bunyans and your Baxters. If any one of these is read more than the holy word of God, it is a reproach to its possessor. The rule with all who would have their names written in the book of life, should be as unalterable as the mandate of the Mede and the Persian; that among books the Bible should be the alpha and the omega, the first and the last.

How graciously has our heavenly Father mingled the bitter with the sweet in his dealings with mankind; and how indulgently has he stayed "his rough wind in the day of the east wind!" "There is no desert in the continent of Africa in which there is not, here and there, a green and beautiful oasis. There is no rocky precipice among the Alps or Apennines, in the clefts of which there is not some sweet violet, or blossom, which the frost has not nipped, and the storm has not blasted." As I looked over my old map, I was reminded of my mercies. If here I was taken ill, again I was permitted to recover my health; if, there, I was exhausted in climbing the precipitous steep, in a little time I stood on the mountain top with exultation; and if, yonder, I was benighted in the bog, soon afterwards I was kneeling on the solid ground, praising God for my deliverance. My old map told me I had not sufficiently reflected on these things, and that I had not half enough magnified the name of the Lord.

But when I looked at my Bible, I had the same lesson set before me in a still stronger point of view. The map told me only of a month of mercies; but my Bible told me, that goodness and mercy had followed me all the days of my life.

My old map brings to my remembrance the Highland gatherings on the hill side, on the day of the sabbath, when the eloquent and white-headed preacher poured out vehemently the truths of the gospel in a language that I knew not. There sat the assembled throng, while the glowing sun was climbing the heavens; and there they sat, too, when the orb of day was descending to the west—patient, attentive, absorbed, and excited. Oh, how I longed to understand Gaelic, and to mingle in their devotions.

But when I turn to my Bible, I have a hundred reminders of devotional gatherings in the marked texts that have been

taken by men of God—Biddulph, Leigh Richmond, Simeon and Scott, Robert Hall, Rowland Hill, and Adam Clarke among them, in preaching from their several pulpits; while I, an eager listener in some distant pew, have been exercised by their fidelity, edified by their wisdom, humbled by their arrows of reproof, and animated and strengthened by their cordial-like consolations. My Bible tells me of many a ministering servant of the Most High, and of many a delighted hearer, now, as I believe, joining in the hallelujahs of heaven.

Blotted and blurred, and tattered and torn as my old map is—for I am obliged to unfold and fold it very tenderly—it cannot be altogether useless, while it reminds me of Scottish loneliness, loveliness, and sublimity; of Scottish toil, adventures, and gratifications; of Scottish simplicity, friendliness, and kindness: but if, in addition to all this, it should send me to my Bible with a keener appetite for its gracious contents, and a livelier thankfulness for my unmerited mercies, I shall have reason to set a value on it as long as one of its fragments hangs to another.

If with a kindly spirit you have accompanied me, reader, in my remarks, it may be that you may get good from them, by thinking more of the book of truth, and reading its sacred pages more diligently. My old map is only a sketch of the Highlands of Scotland; but the Bible is a picture of creation, a chart of the world, and a map of the wilderness we pass through to the promised land, in which are laid down by the hands of our heavenly Father, the hills of his faithfulness, the rivers of his love, the fountains of his mercy, and the highway to heaven.

Let us bind the Bible afresh to our hearts, remembering that "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether: more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward," *Psa. xix. 7-11.*

THE TENDRIL.

"Good morning, Roger," said Mr. A—, as in a stroll round the garden one morning, after an absence of some weeks, he

encountered the gardener. "I hope all is well with you; but you do not look quite as cheerful and happy as usual."

"I am quite well, sir, thank you," replied Roger, touching his hat, and proceeding to give another vigorous poke at a weed with his hoe; "but I am angry with myself, sir, and sorry for what has happened."

"Indeed! what is the matter?"

"Miss Sophy, sir. She is justly angry with me."

"Yes, papa, I have been a good deal vexed," said Miss Sophy, appearing from another walk. "Just come this way, and I will show you a proof of neglect which I should not have expected from Roger. I was anxious to train some very pretty creeping plants over the lower branches of the old oak that shelters my favourite seat, to form a sort of flowery fence on the sunny side; and they were growing beautifully when we left home, but this morning when I came to look at them—just behold the condition in which I found them. The branch forsaken; my plants all trailing on the ground, their delicate flowers mingling with every weed and bramble that lies in the way; and all so spoiled that nothing can be done with them now."

"Poor plants," said Mr. A—, "you are in a degraded condition, certainly."

"It is most vexatious!" added his daughter. "Roger deserves to be dismissed."

The gardener had followed, and now gently raised one of the fallen tendrils.

"I will try what I can do to restore them, sir, if Miss Sophy will allow me; but she forbids me to touch them."

"How has it happened, Roger?" asked his master.

"Well indeed, sir, I do confess that I quite forgot them. I have been working hard at another part of the grounds; and I suppose the strong winds we had some nights ago must have torn them down. I think I can restore some of them, if I may try, but to be sure, not if Miss Sophy tears them about in that way. She will break off those little clasps that have got round the weeds, and then they will die."

"Gently, gently, Sophia," said her father, observing her pulling up and throwing down the long winding stragglers which had scrambled away in all directions. "Let Roger try to repair, if he can, the consequences of his negligence. I am sure he is sorry for having forgotten your orders."

"I do not see what good he can do to them, papa; there will be no screen of flowers there this summer."

"I will do my best, miss, however, if you will please to look it over. See here, sir, how they have wound round this bit of a weed. Now if I can unclasp it without tearing it—"

"It will be a work of time and patience, Roger. The plant seems as content to twine around a weed as round the stately branch you intended to support it, Sophia. You see it is not in its nature to sustain itself; and when the rude blast came that tore it from its elevation, and laid it in the dust, those little clasps, deprived of what they clung round, must still lay hold on something, and they felt about, and here a weed, and there a stone, and here a stick, and there a bramble, have presented something to attract; so the plants have accommodated themselves to what they found; and, mingling with rubbish and decay, are degraded and defiled. Is it not something like the case of fallen man? He was originally created in purity and beauty, with a heart full of warm and aspiring affections which spontaneously twined round God. Oh, how exquisite must have been the congeniality with which Adam hailed, amidst the bowers of Eden, companionship with God! But the rude blast came, and the tendril forsook its lofty hold. Temptation assailed, and sin snapped the union between the Creator and his creature. Then prostrate lay the heart of man, susceptible and loving still, but holy and pure no longer. He could not restore himself to the elevation he had lost and so his tendril affections groped about in darkness and corruption for something still to cling to, and one sin after another, one idol after another, presented its attractions; and retains them in prostration and captivity to this day, excepting only—"

"Nay, dear father," cried Sophia, interrupting him, "let us leave Roger to try if he can carry out the illustration further, and I will freely forgive him."

"Thank you, Miss Sophy," said Roger, whose honest face had been brightening up while his master spoke. "I often think, what many useful, pleasant thoughts I owe to master teaching me about the Lord God, as a husbandman. If He had given us up when we fell away from himself, hope never would have cheered the heart of poor lost man again."

"Roger is right, indeed," said Mr. A—, as they walked on. "I am afraid you have been too hard upon him, Sophia; he is a good man, and his heart has been disentangled from the weeds."

"But, papa, as he professes, and I believe professes truly, to be influenced by the highest principle in the performance of

his duty, it is the more provoking and blamable to find him negligent in our absence."

"You pay religion a high compliment, my dear, to expect perfection from its influence."

"I do not know that I expect perfection exactly; but do you not often say that the tree is known by its fruit?"

"Certainly; our Lord gave the rule; but you must exercise a little more discrimination, and distinguish between a character and an act; between the tenor of a life, and the casual much regretted omission of a duty, or commission of a fault. I do not think that Sophia has a bad temper, characteristically, but I cannot help observing that an ugly excrescence, in the shape of a crooked humour, has sprouted out this morning, under a slight provocation. Roger's habit of life is diligent attention to duty, and a careful regard for his employer's interest and pleasure. This unexpected negligence is an exception to his rule, it is not the fruit of the tree, but an excrescence, which he will prune away, and not allow to appear again. In fact, it is one proof of a well-regulated life, that a fall or a fault excites the attention and provokes the sneer and scoff of an ungodly world. Do not forget to take me with you when you go to inspect Roger's attempt at reparation."

Other occupations detained Sophia all day, and it was not until the next morning that she requested her father to accompany her to the oak tree walk. There stood Roger, viewing with evident complacency the result of his labour. A branch of the majestic tree was tied down to a stake lodged in the ground, the tendrils, all green and lively, were twined at their longest extremity round it, the weeds and brambles all left below, and only here and there presented any sign of the degradation to which the plants had recently been reduced.

"Well done, Roger," said his master; "how have you managed to clear them from the consequences of their dirty ramble?"

"Well, sir; it was as you said, a work of time and patience. I took each separately, and disentangled it by little and little, and what clung to a weed, I laid carefully round the branch, which being as you see, strong and elastic, I ventured to bind down for a while, so that the plants might reach it without straining them at all. Then, when I see they have once more grown safely round it, I shall untie the branch; and Miss Sophy will yet have as pretty a screen of flowers as any lady's arbour can show."

"Well, Sophia, are you satisfied?"

"Yes, papa ; quite satisfied that Roger has done his best ; and I am very sorry for having been so hasty, and saying things that must have wounded your feelings very much, Roger. My temper lost sight of its bright example, and I hope you forgive me for my extravagant anger."

"Bless you, miss," said Roger, brushing the back of his rough hand across his eyes. "If you did but know how sorry I am for my stupid neglect."

"But what does your remedy suggest to us? As the plant so fitly seemed to illustrate the condition of man, let us compare, for a moment, this beautiful and majestic tree to God, who took pity on his fallen, ruined creatures. Man cannot restore himself to holiness and love ; but as an elastic branch of the stately tree can bend to meet the wants of the plant, so the Lord Jesus Christ, lofty in his Godhead, stoops to the nature of the fallen ones, and is laid low in the dust in his manhood. He does not rend or crush those affections amidst their worldly weeds, but side by side, and one by one, he gently disengages and disentangles them, substituting in their stead new attractions in himself, insinuating and accommodating himself to all those little claspers until fairly and firmly they are twined around him by faith, and purified to new hopes and joys and aspirations ; and then, rising again to his original position, he bears back in eternal union to God, the rescued, grateful, captivated hearts of fallen but forgiven men. The eternal Spirit kindling new life, and growth, and energy within, spreads the sweet flowers and fruits of grace over the character, and the sweet savour of active practical religion perfumes the air in which the plants of such heavenly care are found."

"If a man abide not in me," said Jesus, "he is cast forth, withered—gathered—burned." "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit : for without me—or severed from me—ye can do nothing."

B. T.

THE PASTOR OF MÖTTLINGEN ; OR, CHRISTIAN-SIMPLICITY.

WE know from infallible authority that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," and every day we see instances of heavenly wisdom seeming folly in the eyes of the worldly. The conduct of pastor Machtdolph, of whom we are going to give one or two anec-

dotes, no doubt appeared to many extreme folly and absurd credulity, but he had no reason to regret the consequences of following plainly and simply what he thought right; and even that willingness to take every man at his word, which cost him his life, he thought no subject of regret; and as it was the means of bringing about the conversion of a human soul, it must have caused joy in heaven where there is joy over one sinner that repenteth.

Machtdolph was parish minister at Möttlingen, in Würtemberg, a country which though it was disgraced by the conduct of its inhabitants in the earlier period of the Reformation, became afterwards remarkable for purity of morals and simplicity of manners. He was a man of learning and ability, but he was particularly blind to human falseness; nor did he feel it his duty to exercise his ingenuity in discovering evil motives in any man until they were too apparent to be mistaken.

A scoffer at religion, and at the mode of life which often marks the difference between the people of God and the people of the world, wishing to amuse himself, wrote an anonymous letter to the good pastor, saying, that as a friend he wished to point out such and such things in his conduct that would be better altered. Machtdolph, never doubting that the writer meant in a friendly spirit what he said and wrote, wished to thank him; but as the letter had no signature, he could think of no better means of doing so than from the pulpit. The following Sunday he took for his text, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works," and before he quitted the pulpit spoke of the letter, and said that, as probably the writer was amongst the congregation, he hoped he would call upon him and receive in person his thanks for his kind intentions, and listen to some explanation that would show him he was mistaken in some matters which he had alluded to. Surely in this case the spirit that "hopeth all things, believeth all things," spared the simple-minded pastor all the vexation and irritation which a worldly spirit, impatient of reproof, would have subjected him to. Such feelings were probably the portion of the author of the letter, when he found his aim defeated and his satire harmless. He did not venture to show himself. Were this spirit more cultivated, Christians would be less vulnerable to the shafts of ridicule, and would be saved many a trial; for ridicule is very trying, especially to young Christians.

At the time when the armies of revolutionary France crossed

the Rhine, Machtdolph, then an old man, felt much grieved at the sufferings and wants of the Rhinelanders. He had meetings for special prayer on their account, that they might be delivered from the calamities of war ; or that, if it were the Lord's will that war should continue and spread into Würtemberg, all might be taught by his Spirit how to act in such disastrous circumstances, and that he would make their earthly calamities issue in their eternal good.

The French troops soon appeared in the very village where he lived. A party of soldiers entered the parsonage to seize what they could on their hasty march. The good old man threw open all his chests and closets, saying, " I suppose, gentlemen, all belongs to you, take what you like." Many amongst them were so affected by the old man's manner and appearance that they refused to deprive him of anything. But all were not so scrupulous, and the parsonage was soon plundered. The pastor seemed no more disturbed about it, than a shopkeeper would do, if he saw his stores empty, from having profitably sold all his goods.

He stood at the door of the house for some time after the soldiers were out of sight, when an officer, followed by several attendants, rode up and asked whether he could let him have some linen, having heard that linen was cheap and good in that part of the country, and that much would be required on their long march. " I am sorry," said the pastor, " that I have nothing more in the house, the men who were here just now have carried off everything. I have, however, some linen at my daughter's, the schoolmaster's wife, where it is gone to be washed ; if you can wait until that is dry it is at your service." The officer rode on, intending to leave the village, but he took a wrong road, which instead of taking him through the village brought him back to the parsonage.

In the meanwhile Machtdolph's conscience smote him for not having told the whole truth, for he had still two silver spoons left, and he was considering how to overtake the officer and tell him so, when he saw him ride up again. He offered him the spoons, telling him why he did so. There was something in his manner that spoke even more than his words, and the officer not only refused the spoons, but even made an apology for the conduct of the soldiers, hoping the respectable old pastor would pardon their doing what the necessities of war drove them to. In the evening the pastor was surprised to see everything that had been taken away in the morning brought back to the parsonage. The officer who had been so

touched by the words and manner of Machtdolph had made many inquiries about him, and heard that with all his apparent simplicity and unworldliness, he had been for years the benefactor of the village, and the active and talented promoter of every enterprise for the good of the people. He was commander of the detachment which had plundered the parsonage, and feeling that even the necessities of war were not a sufficient excuse for the act, he insisted on his men restoring all that they had taken. Here again the godly simplicity of a child of light delivered him where worldly wisdom would have failed. His conduct was no doubt an answer to the prayers he had offered for guidance in case the enemy should enter his native land. Even worldly wisdom says, "Honesty is the best policy." Few worldly people, however, are truly and conscientiously honest. They do not all steal, and many have a high sense of honour, and would scorn to do anything they condemn as dishonourable; but they have not that deep-seated principle of honesty which casts aside all affectation and dissimulation, and acts honestly and openly in the sight of God.

The great love and kindness of Machtdolph for his fellow-men led to the illness of which he died. One day as he was returning from a neighbouring town where he had been on parish business, an idle fellow who had lately come to Möttlingen perceived him at a little distance. This man was sitting at the door of a way-side inn, with his hand-cart full of iron wares beside him. He had been drinking to refresh himself from the fatigue of pushing along this heavily laden barrow, and descriing the pastor approaching, he betted with a companion within the house that he would get the old man to push his cart up the hill. He went out quickly, so as to be some way from the house before pastor Machtdolph overtook him; he then threw himself on the ground writhing as if in agony, and groaning as though he could scarcely refrain from crying out with pain. The good old man stopped and asked what was the matter. The young fellow answered that he was suffering dreadfully, and did not know how he could ever push his cart up the hill, yet he must do so; the iron wares must be delivered that day. The kind old pastor offered to try what he could do. He seized hold of the handles of the cart, and pushed with all his might until he got it up to the top of the hill; but the day was warm and he was over-heated, and this, joined to the great fatigue he underwent, brought on a fever, and his end soon approached.

He heard that the young man who had so played upon his feelings of benevolence had called to inquire for him, and gone away in tears on hearing that there was no hope of his recovery. The dying pastor desired the young man to be brought to his bed-side if he called again, which he did in the course of that day. On seeing him Machtdolph tried to comfort him, assuring him that the fever was the means his gracious Master used to take him to everlasting happiness, and told him therefore not to fret about it, but to turn to the Lord and to pray for submission to his will, and that assuredly he would be heard; and that he hoped to meet him in the presence of the Saviour reconciled through him and rejoicing that even the silly jest he had practised had been made to work for the good of them both.

The pastor was soon "taken from the evil to come;" but it was long ere the young man found peace in his conscience. For months, if any one tried to comfort him, he would shake his head mournfully and say, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of my brethren, ye did it unto me." But at length the Spirit of God taught him to take comfort from the promise of forgiveness to the penitent and believing. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But while he felt that he was forgiven of God for the sake of Christ, he never could forgive himself.

Pastor Machtdolph is not here given as a model for exact imitation, under all circumstances, in every country, and in every state of society; but when we hear of such good results from perfect simplicity and guilelessness, we may ask ourselves whether such a state of mind is not preferable to the cold selfishness, seeking only its own convenience, of which we see so much in the world; and however men may judge of guileless simplicity, it has the approbation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said in praise of Nathaniel, that in him was no guile: and he was one of the first to acknowledge Christ when the wise and learned were rejecting him. There is in Scripture no blessing pronounced on worldly wisdom, while there are many on lowliness and meekness; and God often chooses the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

E. M. P.

THORNS AND THISTLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

OBSTINACY.

It was a bright frosty morning, and Mr. and Mrs. Hatton still lingered at the breakfast-table, looking over the newspapers, and occasionally conversing. Their son Alfred and his cousin Henry were busy near a window, preparing their skates for an excursion on the ice.

"It is true," said Mr. Hatton, referring to some observation which his lady had made; "it is quite true, that without decision of character there can be no heroism."

At the word heroism Alfred flung his skate to the ground, started up, and, going to where his parents were, said, "So, papa, you think it is decision of character that makes a hero?"

"Not altogether, Alfred," replied his father. "I only meant that it is one of the necessary ingredients."

"Well then, please, papa, to tell me what you mean by decision of character? I should like to know exactly, since the attainment of it is necessary towards being a hero."

Mr. Hatton smiled, saying, "It is not always easy to be ready with an exact definition, my son: but perhaps it will explain my meaning to say, that the quality I referred to is, quickness in perceiving the best course of action, and determination in pursuing it. However, Alfred, it is probable that we do not think just alike on the subject of heroes. What is your idea of one?"

"Oh, papa, there can be but one opinion on that point," he replied, with animation. "I mean, by a hero, such men as Alexander and Napoleon, and others, whom we read of, whose deeds will be admired as long as this world lasts."

"But not longer, Alfred. Not in that day when 'every man's work shall be made manifest,—because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is,' 1 Cor. iii. 13.

"I should be inclined to restrict the term hero to those who use the superior powers with which they are endowed, to the glory of the Giver, and the good of their fellow creatures; so you see, Alfred, there may be more than one opinion on the subject. We can discuss it on another occasion, but at present there is not time, as I see the young friends who are to accompany you and Henry on the skating excursion, coming across the lawn. I will now only remark that decision of character is very desirable even in those who cannot aspire to heroism; but I would also remind you of what we have so

often spoken of before, namely, that the best passions and qualities with which man was originally gifted are, by reason of sin, perverted; and are like the thorns on plants, which, if rightly cultivated, would have been branches bringing forth flowers and fruit. Consequently, decision of character is not without its abortive representation in the human mind."

"And I," said Alfred's mother, when she saw him and Henry setting out to meet their young companions, "I would remind you, my dear boys, that—

"O'er the ice as o'er pleasure you lightly should glide;
Both have gulfs which their flattering surfaces hide."

"Should you not like to be a hero?" said Alfred to his cousin, as, with their skates in their hands, they crossed the lawn together.

"I am not sure of that until I know more of your father's opinion on the subject," was Henry's reply.

"Not sure! Well, Henry, there is no decision of character in that answer; so you want one necessary qualification."

"I hope not, Alfred; but I have been thinking of what uncle said, of the perversion of the quality; and should like to avoid it."

"Oh! don't fear," Alfred answered, laughing. "If the germ of this fine quality be not naturally implanted in your mind, there can be no danger of its springing up into what papa calls thorns."

They now were joined by their play-fellows, and forming a merry party proceeded to the park, in which was a small lake, or rather pond, the water of which was shallow, and now completely frozen over. Here, Mr. Hatton had told them, they might amuse themselves without any danger.

The skates were soon adjusted, and the boys glided up and down, and across the glassy surface, with much glee. Alfred, whose head was full of being a hero, had determined to display superior intrepidity on this occasion; but there being no danger to apprehend, his companions were all as fearless as himself; and he glided and fell, was laughed at, and got up again, without attaining the least notoriety. At last he said, "This place is too small for any amusement. Let us go to the canal; it is not half a mile distant; and is quite frozen. There we can run races on the ice, and see who can proceed longest in a straight line."

This proposal met with approbation; but Henry interposed, saying, "Alfred, it was here that my uncle desired us to skate; he did not mention the canal."

"And therefore he did not prohibit our going there," Alfred replied. "Papa thinks us quite old enough to judge for ourselves on such occasions, and likes us to do so; he thinks it gives decision of character."

Henry was not perfectly convinced by this reasoning; but he went to the canal with the rest of the party.

"See," cried Alfred, the surface is all frozen over, and in excellent order for us to skate on."

"But we do not know to what depth it is frozen;" said Henry. "And the water of the canal is deeper, and has more motion than that of the pond, which should be considered."

"Considered! Oh, I hate considering. Nothing like what papa calls 'quickness in perceiving the best course of action, and determination in pursuing it! Henry, you are too fond of calculating consequences: but let all who are fonder of acting follow me."

Just as Alfred and his young associates were about to embark on the canal, a countryman came up and said, "Young gentlemen, you had better not skate here; the ice is thin, particularly at the other side, and the water is deep."

In consequence of this admonition most of the boys drew back; but Alfred was not of the number. No; this was, he thought, a fit opportunity to act the hero. "What nonsense!" said he, to those who hesitated. "Surely we are as good judges of the thickness of the ice as this man."

"Not quite, sir," the man replied, "for I know some was taken up at the other side yesterday, for the ice-house; and it has not had time to grow thick since then."

But Alfred thought his character for the heroic quality of decision was at stake; and his only answer was, "Let whoever is not a coward follow me, even to this dangerous other side."

Away he glided; and after making a figure of eight, and a few other fantastic shapes on the ice, with impunity, went off towards the dangerous other side, notwithstanding another warning from the peasant.

"Cousin Henry, I did not think you were a coward," he shouted as he got near the opposite bank; but, just then, a crackling noise was heard—the ice had broken, and they saw poor Alfred go down.

The boys were terrified, they shrieked, and ran about in all directions; but nobody seemed to know what to do, except Henry, who, with surprising calmness, said a few words to the countryman, and immediately stepping on the ice, went to his cousin's assistance. With much difficulty he succeeded in

getting so near Alfred as to catch the collar of his coat ; and, notwithstanding his own precarious footing, to keep him up until the countryman, who had, at full speed, crossed on a wooden bridge at some little distance, was able to drag him to the bank. By the same friendly assistance he was taken home, stupified by cold and fright. The shock which his father and mother received on seeing him in this state was great ; however, no serious consequences ensued ; and when he had been placed in a warm bed, and they saw him fall into a profound sleep, their hearts were lifted up in thankfulness to that gracious Being who had preserved their dear child in the hour of danger.

When, on the following morning, Alfred awoke, he was perfectly well. His father, mother, and cousin were soon assembled in his room. " I have acted very foolishly, and caused you all a great deal of uneasiness," he began ; but Mr. Hatton interrupted him, saying, " You have, indeed, my dear boy. I have gathered all the particulars from Henry : and, if I do not mistake, in trying to exhibit decision of character, you have fallen into what, according to our theory, I would call its distorted representative—the dangerous, and, I must add, despicable vice of obstinacy. Is it not so ?"

" I believe it is," said Alfred, looking much ashamed.

" Well, my son, the adventure of yesterday will impress upon your mind the difference between decision and obstinacy more forcibly than any dissertation on the subject could do. It was well illustrated in yours and in Henry's conduct on the occasion. Instead of foolishly rejecting all evidence against what it might have been pleasant to do, he at once perceived what was the best course of action, and acted accordingly ; not only by staying off the ice, but by going on it afterwards, even at some risk of his own life, to save yours."

" Dear, kind cousin !" cried Alfred ; " how good you were ; how courageous ; and how little I deserved it !"

These words were followed by an affectionate embrace ; and Mr. Hatton said, " For the present, my son, we must keep you quiet, and not discuss the subject of true heroism, or any other that is exciting. I will only add a sincere wish that we may, every one of us, remember when we desire to cultivate any moral excellence, how impossible it is to do so in our own strength. The natural mind, defiled by sin, can of itself produce nothing of real worth in the sight of God—nothing but thorns and thistles. But He who gave his Son to die for us, is ever ready to give us also ' grace to help in time of need,' and thus to make the desert soul even as a watered garden.

When God is 'as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree;'—then may he say, 'From me is thy fruit found,' Hos. xiv. 5—8."

E. F. G.

WHICH IS THE WAY?

It is now more than twenty years ago since the following occurrence took place:—

A young man of good connexions and property, who had spent his youth much in the manner in which the butterfly passes its brief existence in the summer sunshine and amidst the flowers, had been brought to consider that great question to which no answer can ever be given—"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The consideration of this question, by God's grace, brought him as a penitent believer to the cross of Christ, and led him to a new life; he lived thenceforth not unto himself, nor for a world, the fashion of which passeth away, but unto God, and he presented his life a sacrifice unto Him who had redeemed him by his blood. He took every means which presented itself of leading others to the knowledge and love of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord, striving to fulfil his own vocation and ministry in the church of God.

One evening as he was slowly riding along a retired country road he heard the sound of wheels behind him, and presently a traveller in a gig drove up, drew in his horse, and asked if he could tell him which was the way to a country town at some little distance. The road happened to be rather intricate from the point at which they then were; but about two miles off it became plain, and sign-posts afterwards indicated it clearly. The young man, therefore, having explained the intricacy of the route to the traveller, said as he himself was merely riding for exercise, he would willingly accompany him so far on his road. The kindness of the offer and of the manner with which it was made pleased the young stranger, who, as they rode along, informed him that he was a commercial traveller, and having some business which must be transacted the next morning at the neighbouring town, he had been uneasy when he found himself embarrassed as to the way to it. The young man turning to him, with a smile and look of benevolence and candour, turned this remark to a good account, and spoke to his new acquaintance of "the way" that leadeth unto life everlasting. Comparing our state in this life to that of persons

desirous of reaching a certain destination, but uncertain of the way to it, he alluded to the folly of people saying that, if every one went his own way, all would meet at the same place at last; that all ways were alike, and that it was bigotry to suppose that we alone had found the right one, simply because we had looked at the sign-post which others were too proud, or too much engaged in looking about them, to read. As he found his companion quite ignorant of the religion of the gospel, he spoke to him of the two roads mentioned in the Bible as leading to our eternal destination: "the broad road" that leads to destruction, and "the narrow road" that leads to life. He told him that both these roads were clearly pointed out, and that the word of God was the sign-post which indicated them so distinctly, that none who looked with a real desire to see could mistake, and which showed their characteristics so plainly, that all who were walking in either might tell whether they were in the broad or narrow road.

He found that his companion, although he had a road-book and a travelling-map, and often read them, had never been in the habit of referring to the sign-post he alluded to. And then he spoke to him of Jesus Christ, who is "the way" by which men enter the narrow road to life, and the means by his Spirit whereby they walk therein, and the end whereunto they finally attain. He told him that the characteristics of the two sets of travellers to eternity, those who walked in the broad road, and those in the narrow road, were inscribed on the sign-post he spoke of; and to make his meaning clear, he drew from his pocket a small Bible, and read from Gal. v. 19—25, the following passages, saying, that the first description, or that of the works of the flesh, indicated the broad-road travellers; the latter, or that of the works of the Spirit, the narrow-road travellers. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

The young man then dwelt on the known truth, that *here* we have no abiding city, and on the equally admitted fact, that

almost all persons, high and low, rich and poor, profess to seek one to come; but with how much indecision and uncertainty! content neither to know the way, nor to see that they are walking in that which leadeth unto life; but that our abiding city is in eternity, and that after this life nothing will ever rectify a mistake if the way be missed.

The young man and the traveller parted at the cross roads: the sign-post was there, and pointing to it the former said to the latter with a smile, "Farewell, remember the sign-post I have spoken to you of. Look at the Bible to know if you are in the right way for a happy eternity; and if ever in your future travels you should ask 'Which is the way?' remember that a stranger told you to seek the way that leadeth unto life."

Years passed on, and the two had never met: they had apparently forgotten each other. The young man had become a minister of Christ, and going once on some mission to a country town distant from his own rural charge, he was received by the rector of the parish. While they were together his curate came in, and at once stood still at the door, gazing at the visitor, who looked at him as on one he had not seen before. Suddenly the curate darted forward, and stretching out his hand cried with some emotion, and with a sparkling countenance "I cannot, surely, be mistaken; you are the man who told me 'the way.'" The circumstance had quite passed from the visitor's mind. With gratitude and joy he heard that the way he had pointed out to a strange traveller had been found by him, and that the knowledge he had gained from his researches after that evening's journey, had finally been the means of bringing a soul to Christ, and adding a faithful and zealous minister to the church of God.

S. B.

THE WORLD.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John ii. 15. WHAT is the world against which we are here warned? Many will answer, "riches, possessions, pomp, splendour, these things constitute the world," and our own hearts may be ready at once to echo the statement; and seeing that many possess none of these things, we come to the conclusion that we are in no danger, and stand in no need of the warning which is in reality addressed to every one of the fallen race of man.

Now let us search this subject more carefully, and that we may arrive at the truth, let us turn to the Scriptures of truth, where the characters of men are presented to us, divested of

following after knowledge as an end, not as a means, and therefore it is "the world" to him. To glorify God is not the great object of his life, and while he is "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," he is still in ignorance of the first elementary principle, that "in Christ Jesus are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Look at that widowed mother, binding up her broken heart, not with the healing leaves gathered from the tree of life, but with the broken reeds of an earthly affection. Around that one child whom God has in mercy left to be unto her as the gourd was to Jonah, "a shadow over her head," she is concentrating all the best energies of her heart, all the warmest affections of her nature. She has received the gift, and overlooked the Giver, and while she believes that she has given her heart to God, and that the world has become to her a desolate wilderness, she has yet to learn to set her "affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

Look at that son of labour, toiling night and day to obtain for himself and his family their daily bread. "He rises up early, and sits up late." And so life is passing away from him, yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not. He thinks "the world" has no hold upon him, for of its smiling gifts he has received not any, and yet all his thoughts, and words, and deeds are bounded by its narrow limits. He has overlooked the precept, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." In his daily anxious care for preserving the life of the body, he has forgotten the great object for which that life was given, and which alone invests it with all its dignity and importance. Eternity depends upon this fleeting span of time, and never until this one great thought lays real hold upon the mind, will the perishable things around us fall back into their real and right position. "Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

C. H.

"A 'CHEERFUL GIVER."

THE following interesting incident which lately occurred to a gentleman while he was soliciting subscriptions for the building of a church in the north of England deserves to be made known, as affording an example of self-denying benevolence, well-deserving of imitation, and which cannot fail to say to

the heart of every pious reader, "Go and do thou likewise." He says:—

"I was at —, collecting for the building, when I called on a clergyman. During our conversation he recommended me to make a point of calling upon Mary B—; and on my inquiring who Mary B— was, he replied, 'She is the cook in the family of Mr. —.' I observed that it appeared to me to be ridiculous to call upon a person, in such a situation in life, for such an object. My friend, however, replied, 'Do call, and make use of my name, and tell her I sent you.'

"In consequence of this recommendation, I called, when I saw Mary B—, and briefly explained to her the object of my errand, to which she listened with patient attention. And what was the response? Not any of those which I had been so much accustomed to hear. *Not*, 'There are so many of such calls!' *Not*, 'We are building a church (or a school) in this place;' or, that 'Charity begins at home;' or, that 'There is no need of so many churches;' or, that 'I have so many poor relations.' No, Mary B—'s truly Christian heart would not allow her to resort to any such common-place excuses. Her simple reply was, 'Your object, sir, I am sure, is a very good one; and as I love to do good, I will see what I can do for you.' She then left the room, and went up-stairs.

"During the time that she was absent, I employed myself in speculating as to the probable amount of her donation, whether it would be 2*s.* 6*d.*, or possibly, at the most 5*s.* But what was my astonishment, what were my feelings, when this humble disciple of the Lord Jesus, although ranking only with 'the poor of this world' but truly 'rich in faith,' on her second appearance, presented me with a 5*l.* note!

"As soon as I could recover from my surprise, I observed to her, 'Surely, you do not intend the whole of this for me?' To which she meekly replied, 'Yes, indeed, sir, I do. I love to do good. The Lord has greatly blessed me; and I am sure yours is a good object, and you are quite welcome to it.' I could only express my gratitude to her, and bless God 'for the exceeding grace' which was bestowed upon her.

"I was shortly afterwards informed, that there was nothing extraordinary in this act of liberality on the part of Mary B: for that she had lately given a similar sum to the Church Missionary Society; and was in the habit of giving not less than a sovereign at the public collections at the church; and was also most munificent in her private donations to the poor.

"It may very probably be asked, 'How could Mary, in her

humble capacity of a servant, obtain the means of doing all these truly noble acts of Christian benevolence?" Not, certainly, from her wages alone—that would have been quite impossible; but I found, on inquiry, that her former master, as an acknowledgment for her long and faithful services, had left her, by his will, a house which let for 35*l.* a-year, and also a legacy of 500*l.* in money, which, supposing it to produce five per cent., would make the amount of her annual income 60*l.*

"Should any one be disposed to remark, 'Oh! Mary B— was independent, and could therefore well afford to act in this liberal manner,' may it not be justly replied, 'Where could another Mary B— be found who would be equally ready thus cheerfully to give, to a stranger, for an object nearly three hundred miles distant, and that object the erection of a church, one-twelfth part of her income, besides contributing so liberally to the numerous other appeals to her benevolence as above stated?' Doubtless, this humble, self-denying Christian was influenced by the same spirit which actuated the churches of Macædonia, who responded to the call made on 'their liberality,' not only 'to their power,' but 'beyond their power,' 2 Cor. viii. 3, 5. 'And this they did' (writes the apostle) 'not as we hoped; but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.' And shall not her Divine Master, who 'is not unrighteous to forget the work and labour of love,' which this his faithful servant hath 'showed toward his name,' Heb. vi. 10, greet her, at the great day of his appearing, with those gracious words of commendation, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?' Matt. xxv. 23. Would that the Lord of the harvest would be graciously pleased to raise up many more such 'cheerful givers' as Mary B— amongst us in this our 'time of need;' seeing that 'the fields are white already unto harvest,' both at home and abroad, and that there are only wanting the needful funds to enable us to 'send forth labourers' to 'gather in' and house the precious grain, Luke x. 2."

A. A.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS IN EARNEST.

Will you listen, my dear friend, to a few words from a fellow-labourer in your important work?

The souls of children are committed to our care. The glory of God, through their salvation, should be our constant

aim. It is not enough to meet the children week by week, to hear their lessons, and go through the business of the school. Regular attendance, perfect repetition, outward obedience and attention, these are not enough—the questions before us are, “What are our children in the sight of God? and what are we doing to lead them to Christ?”

Bring your class before your mind. Think of your children one by one, and ask how many you could hope to meet in heaven, if they were now called into eternity! Has any one felt the burden of his sins, and believed in Jesus Christ for salvation? Do you hope that any one is born again, “renewed in the spirit of his mind,” proving by daily conduct that he is a child of God? Oh! rest not till you have that hope regarding all. It is not the will of God that any should perish. The salvation of every child in your class is not too much to hope, too much to ask. Say, will you be satisfied with less? Which can you bear to think of as a child of Satan, under the curse of God; refusing a Saviour’s mercy; deaf to His calls of love? Which could you bear to see another day turning away under the sound, “Depart?”

Let us awake to our responsibility, and ask ourselves, have we faithfully performed our duty to our children, or to God? Have we felt the priceless worth of the immortal soul? Do we believe that, however amiable our children may appear, they are “by nature the children of wrath;” and, dying in that state, cannot enter the kingdom of heaven? Have we felt their danger, thought over it, and wept over it when alone with God? In the still hour of prayer, have their names been breathed before him; and through the day are they borne upon our hearts? Have we taken the sweet promises of God, and pleaded them on their behalf? “We know that if we ask anything according to thy will, thou hearest us; and is it not thy will that these children should be saved?” In the spirit of holy Jacob have we ever cried, “We cannot let thee go till thou hast blessed them;” until the Spirit be poured upon them from on high, till one shall say, “I am the Lord’s; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob?” Have we knelt before our Saviour, and one by one brought our little ones to him? “Did’st thou not say of old, ‘Suffer the little children to come unto me,’ and wilt thou turn these away?” If this spirit of believing, fervent prayer were ours, would it not prevail? Surely the ear of God would hearken to us, the arm of the Lord would be stretched forth to save; our children would be made willing in the day of his power!

young converts would arise in our schools, numerous and beautiful as the dewdrops of the morning, reflecting, as those dewdrops the colours of the natural sun, the brightness of the Sun of righteousness, to their Redeemer's praise.

Then, as to our instructions. Do we believe that Christ, by shedding his blood, has opened a way whereby our children may be saved; and that, sinful as they are, they are welcome to this Saviour, yea, commanded to go to him, to believe and live? With affection and earnestness have we pressed home this truth upon their hearts? Do they see by our voice and manner that we feel what we say? Do we urge them to "flee from the wrath to come," as we would entreat them to escape for their lives from their house in flames?

Have we *expected* their conversion, or would it not actually have surprised us to see the swelling tear, and hear the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" escape from the burdened heart? Is our great aim to bring the truth of God fully and clearly before them, and to this end do we conscientiously and diligently employ the fleeting, precious hours of Sabbath-time? Do we, in the week, think and pray over our lessons, so that we may have a store of truth, which we ourselves understand and feel, to bring before our classes? Do we endeavour, from the passing events of daily life, to gather simple illustrations of Scripture truth; and present that truth in the shortest, easiest words that we can find? Do we herein feel our entire dependence on "the Spirit of grace," remembering that the seed will never grow without the rain of heaven?

What do we *know* of the children individually? Have we sought by gentleness—gentleness even in reproof—to win their confidence and love? Have we ever taken them alone, prayed with them, and tenderly inquired, "Are you, or are you not, a child of God?" Do we visit them at home, know their family circumstances, at once inquire for them if absent: in every way lead them to regard us as their friends?

These are our duties to our classes; conscience must say how they have been fulfilled.

Time rushes on, and sweeps our children from us in its downward course; a little while they are within our call, then hurried past us to the busy scenes of life, or drifted away into eternity. Children have left us, never to return, whose ungodly lives may even now be records of our unfaithfulness. Does it not become us to fall low in humiliation before God? Opportunities lost, hours misimproved, rise up to memory and would overwhelm us, but that we know that "the blood of

Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." And here, it may be well to make a more personal inquiry. What is the state of our own souls towards God? Is vital, heart-religion flourishing within? Are we "walking with God," living in communion with him, "anointed with his Spirit," dwelling in his love? Does the love of Jesus send us forth to speak and act for him? Has not the word of God been slighted by us, and secret prayer been restrained? It may be that faith is weak, and love grown cold. A cloud of worldliness may have swept across, veiling the Sun of righteousness; and if it be thus as to our personal condition before God, shall we wonder if, with regard to others, the blessing be withheld? If so, let us arise and go to our Father, and say, "Father, we have sinned." Where no eye but his can see, no ear but his can hear, let us pour out the confession of our hearts, and seek forgiveness through the blood of the Lamb. Let us take comfort for the time to come. "God is able to make all grace abound toward us; that we, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Let us implore that grace; and should we see another sabbath dawn, may we meet our children as we never have before, with deep humility and self-distrust, more simple dependence upon God; with warmer love, with brighter hope, and with more ardent zeal.

But it may be feared that there are unconverted teachers in our schools; and one who reads these lines may himself be far from God. Dear friend, think of the awful situation in which you place yourself. You feel not, you really believe not, the truths you teach. You speak of the soul, but you feel not its worth. You speak of the guilt and danger of sin, but it is sin you love. You speak of a Saviour's love, but the Saviour you neglect. Oh, think and tremble: sinners may perish through your carelessness, and their blood be required at your hands. You must give account of your teaching unto God. You will meet your children at the judgment seat, and with feelings—oh! how different from the apathy with which you regard them now! Now you may trifle away the sabbath time, and be glad when the weary hour is gone; but then you may lament over opportunities gone, when you see the scholar's place at the left hand of the Judge, and the thought comes home to you as a scorpion's sting, "If his teacher had been faithful, he might never have been there."

But God may honour his own truth, even from your lips, to the conversion of a child: and now, picture him at the right hand of the Judge, and yourself, his teacher, at the left.

Think of him, clothed in a wedding garment, the righteousness of the Saviour, to whom you pointed him; but whom you despised; think of him entering in to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and you yourself shut out!

If what you teach your children is the truth, what will become of you? Do you tell them, that not only the outwardly "wicked shall be turned into hell," but "all the nations that forget God?"—that "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him?"—that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." What is all this, but passing sentence on yourself? Oh, fellow-sinners, awake! "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light!"

If you feel your danger, know there is salvation, even for you, in Jesus Christ. Ask for the "Spirit's teaching." Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! Cast yourself as a guilty sinner at his feet. Trust his power and love. Confess your sins. Give yourself up entirely to him, and, being "justified by faith," you shall have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The love of Jesus shall be shed into your heart, and sweetly constrain you to obedience; and your one desire henceforth shall be, "to live not unto yourself, but unto Him who died for you." Then all the commands of the Saviour will be dear—the very joy of your life will be to do his will, and then from new motives, and with higher aim, you will seek to "feed his lambs."

'Tis not a cause of small import

The teacher's care demands;

But what might fill an angel's heart,

And filled a Saviour's hands.

We watch for souls, for whom the Lord

Did heavenly bliss forego;

For souls that must for ever live

In raptures or in woe.

All to the great tribunal haste,

The account to render there;

And should'st Thou strictly mark our faults,

Lord, where should we appear?

May we that Jesus, whom we teach,

Our own Redeemer see;

And watch Thou daily o'er our souls,

That we may watch for thee.



THE SHETLAND PONY.

"I FEAR you are not quite well this morning, my child! I expected that the return of your brothers would have restored your spirits, but you seem unusually grave and silent."

"I expected so too, mamma," replied Fanny, "but—"

"But what, Fanny? Finish your sentence, or shall I finish it for you?—but the realization of every earthly hope is tinctured with disappointments."

"Just so, mamma."

"And just right, my child, that we may be led to seek more anxiously for the hope that maketh not ashamed. But how has the pleasure you anticipated in the return of the dear boys been disappointed?"

"Do not you think they are changed, mamma?"

"Yes; grown tall, and more manly: but these are agreeable changes. Tell me what you mean?"

Fanny burst into tears. "I mean that they do not love me as they did."

"I have not perceived it, and feel sure you are mistaken," her mother replied.

"No, mamma, I am not. It is true that when they arrived last night they met me with their usual affection, and seemed

to feel deeply for all the sufferings and privations occasioned by the fall I had during their absence, greatly regretting that we could no longer walk, and ride, and visit our old haunts together. But Herbert said, 'Well, Fan, keep up your spirits, we can draw you in your Bath-chair about the shrubberies and garden;' while Charles added, 'And we can read and play duets together as well as ever. I have brought you new books and music.' I was sure some of these pleasant plans would be realized this morning, but in answer to my proposal to that effect, they said, looking embarrassed, that they could not be with me to day; and the moment breakfast was over, off they went without even telling me where. They would not have done so when they were schoolboys; but now that they have become university students I am no longer a companion for them."

"Fanny," said her mother, gravely, "you are now giving way to very wrong feelings. Many think that by this kind of jealousy they but show an amiable susceptibility of disposition, and the warmth of their affection; but I can perceive in it only suspicion and distrust—both very mean qualities."

"Mamma, when what I complain of amounts to certainty, it ought not to be called suspicion and distrust."

"There is no certainty in the case, my child, except that your brothers had some engagement or plan in view which they deemed of more importance than the one you proposed. Until you know what it is, you are wrong in taking it for granted that their doing so proved any diminution of love for you. I must still maintain that your uneasiness on this occasion proceeds from a distrust, by which you probably do great wrong to those you love so well."

"Well, mamma, if so, they will forgive me; jealousy arises from affection."

Her mother answered, "There is a sickly sentimentalism in that notion which is opposed not only to good sense, but to the spirit of true religion. If you indulge in such a feeling, Fanny, you will be always unhappy; fretting over the slights of friends when they have no existence but in your own imagination. And now, my dear, can it prove your love for your brothers that you at once attribute unkind motives to their conduct because you do not know what their real motives were? Is this in accordance with that charity which 'is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, believeth all things, hopeth all things,' 1 Cor. xiii. 5-7."

"Well, dear mamma, it is after all but a trifling matter."

"Still, my child, it is of importance, because trifles have much influence in forming the character, and I would warn you to struggle—always in reliance upon help from above—against the slightest symptom of this jealous, distrustful disposition. If indulged in, it will lead not only to what I have already hinted at—making yourself and your friends constantly uneasy—but to still worse consequences. Yes, dearest Fanny, it will induce the sinful, faithless habit of distrusting the love of your heavenly Father in his dealings with you when you cannot understand them; and in time of trial render you unable to realize the comfort which the Lord has so kindly vouchsafed to give his people, in that gracious assurance, 'All things work together for good to them that love God,' " Rom. viii. 28.

"Oh! I trust not, mamma. Were it not for my faith in this, and similar promises, how could I have borne all the suffering which arose from my accident, and the tedious—oh! how tedious—confinement that has followed?"

"Yes, Fanny; it truly was a blessing to me to witness the patience with which, through faith in that Saviour who suffered so much for you, you were enabled to bear days and nights of intense pain. But let us be sure, my child, to give the whole glory to God, for we know that faith is 'the gift of God,' Eph. ii. 8. I do believe that, generally speaking, Christians bear great trials better than lesser ones, and probably it is because they then feel more deeply the necessity of asking for grace to help in time of need. We then feel our utter helplessness; but under small trials pride succeeds in persuading us that we can meet them in our own strength, which we never can. Think, my child, has this been your case during the period of your tedious recovery?"

"Perhaps too often, mamma," replied Fanny, colouring; "but can you much wonder, when you recollect all that this injured limb subjects me to—the loss of my pleasant walks, rides, working in my garden—almost everything I cared for."

"No one can feel for you, my beloved child, more deeply than your mother; still I cannot remember that frightful accident without joy and gratitude to God for having so unexpectedly restored you thus far, and with the cheering prospect of being able, in the course of some months, to walk as well as ever. When I compared your state with that of poor Mrs. L—, yesterday, of whose recovery there is no hope, how my heart swelled with thankfulness at the undeserved mercy shown to us. I should like to know, Fanny, if you experienced the same feeling."

"I will tell you the truth, mamma—I fear not. No, with shame I own, that in comparing Mrs. L—'s condition with my own, I forgot the essential difference, that I am likely to be restored, and that she is not; and I was thinking—oh! too surely with envy—how rich she was, and how she could have everything to supply the want of her limbs, particularly that beautiful little Shetland pony and carriage, in which she could go everywhere she liked, so different from my stupid Bath-chair, with a servant to draw me about on the lawn till I am tired of looking at the same things. But I was wrong—very wrong: may God forgive me."

"Amen, my child; may He, for his Son's sake, forgive all our ingratitude. Had we anything like a due sense of his love, and our own unworthiness, we should feel that the very least favour he shows us is undeserved; and our minds would be imbued with that spirit which the apostle recommends, when he speaks of 'giving thanks always for all things,' Eph. v. 20.

"Well, mamma, I will try to forget the Shetland pony and Mrs. L—'s nice little carriage. I believe it was the expectation of my brothers' return last night that caused me to long so greatly for such a mode of conveyance when I saw it yesterday morning. I thought it would be so delightful to be able to accompany them everywhere. But they are happier without me, and I will be content with the Bath-chair and the lawn, till it please God to restore me."

"I hope so, Fanny; and try also to be content with your brothers, giving them credit for kind motives when you know nothing to the contrary. But above all, dear child, upon every occasion trust implicitly to the love of Him who has promised to make all things work together for good to those that love him."

Fanny's brothers did not return home till dinner time: they were in high spirits, and though as affectionate as ever, yet, as they did not tell where they had been, she would not condescend to inquire. When dinner was over one of them said, "Have you ever taken a sketch of the waterfall, that we agreed would make so pretty a picture, Fanny, when we were at home last autumn?"

"Never."

"Then you must come there now and do so."

"I suppose, Herbert," replied Fanny, colouring, and looking much hurt, "that you forget I have been lamed by an acci-

dent during your absence. The waterfall is two miles from this, even beyond the reach of my Bath-chair. My company now can but hinder your pleasure anywhere."

"We must try how that is," said Charles, laughing. "To the waterfall you shall come. Here are your bonnet and shawl. Herbert, help me to put them on, and to bring her to the hall-door."

This was soon accomplished; and at the door, to the amazement of Fanny, stood the very Shetland pony and little carriage which had excited her envy the day before. They placed her in it. "What!" she cried, "is this Mrs L—'s equipage?"

"No, dear, dear sister, it is yours now," her brothers exclaimed; "accept it as a token of our love."

"Yes, Fanny," said her mother, "after you retired last night, some one mentioned that as Mrs. L— was going on the continent she wished to sell her little carriage. Your father had just presented Charles and Herbert with the present their uncle sent them to enable them to visit the Cumberland Lakes during the vacation. They immediately decided on passing the whole vacation with their dear sister, and spending the money in procuring her a way of accompanying them in their rambles about the neighbourhood. Their business from home this morning was to make the purchase."

Fanny burst into tears; kissed her brothers over and over, and acknowledging her unjust suspicions concerning their conduct towards her, entreated their pardon. She concluded by saying, "Oh! how many things I have been taught by this,—above all, a sense of my own unworthiness of the kindness and love I meet with—I never will forget it."

"Do not my child," said her mother. "And when, on far more important occasions than this, doubts and distrust arise in your mind concerning those you ought to trust, remember the Shetland pony."

"So now," added Herbert, "take the reins, and let us be off to the waterfall."

E. F. G.

YOU HAVE THE REINS IN YOUR HAND; KEEP THEM.

MOTHER! gazing with delight on your offspring around you, yours is a high and holy charge. Your children are young immortals, tarrying with you for a time, to be trained for eternity. To you they are confided in their helplessness. You have, under God, to protect them in danger, and preserve

them from sin and sorrow. While they are young they are in a great degree in your power, and you can control them; it will not always be so. You have now, so to speak, the reins in your hand; take care that you keep them.

Mother! forget not that the acorn grows into an oak, and the trickling rill swells to a rushing river. You may do what you will with these at first, but you can do nothing with them at last. If you train not the twig, you will never bend the tree. If you direct not the rivulet, you cannot hope to restrain the flowing flood. Set your face against the beginning of evil, for if the first step be arrested, the second will not be taken. But can it be?

“Can the fond mother from herself depart?
Can she forget the darling of her heart,
The little darling whom she bore and bred,
Nursed on her knees and at her bosom fed;
To whom she seemed her every thought to give,
And in whose life alone she seem'd to live?”

Can she so far neglect the welfare of her child as to fail in bringing it up in virtue and piety, in defiance of the admonition of God's holy word, “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

“Yes, from herself the mother may depart;
She may forget the darling of her heart.”

allowing it, led on by its unbridled passions, to wander in crooked pathways of folly, cruelty, and crime. Many have done this; many are now doing it, and bringing on themselves tears of regret and groans of anguish. What would they not give to retrieve the past, but, alas! it is too late. The child that should have been a cause of joy has become a source of sorrow; a serpent, a cockatrice stinging the bosom in which it was nestled and fostered. Fond mother! think of these things while yet your children are young. They are not yet beyond your control; you have the reins in your hand, keep them, if you would retain your peace.

Has the little one that you gaze on with love, been led by bad example to chase the poor butterfly and tear its wing? Pass it not over; think not lightly of the deed, but, with all the fervent fondness of a mother, fly to the rescue. It rests with you in a measure whether cruelty or kindness shall take possession of the heart of your offspring. Correct him with judgment, and you may save him; leave him to himself, and you may lose him for ever. It is now or never with you. You have the reins in your hand! Mother, hold them fast!

Bring up your babe to love the truth, and to regard a falsity as a dark crime. Watch for the first appearance of dissimulation, strive to cut it down, and root it out of the heart before it becomes a habit. Trifling with deceit is worse than playing with an edged tool. It is not the unblushing falsehood, but the timid equivocation that is the beginning of untruthfulness. A child who was forbidden to eat the currants, pretended, on the approach of his mother, to be driving away the flies from the tree. In such a case, up, mother ! your child is in danger, and you can, with God's help, protect him by gentle and firm reproof ; you have now the reins in your hand ; if you once lose them, you may never regain them.

Not easy is it to keep pride out of the childish bosom, and, too often, parents promote, rather than oppose it. Be ready, mother, on the instant, to discover and resist it. The pink frock and the new button-clothes are harmful, or harmless, just as you turn them to account. "My pink frock is better than yours," and "you have not got such a nice jacket with buttons as I have," are childish remarks that must not be allowed to escape your mild correction. Remember that you have much at stake: Would you see your son or your daughter grow up free from pride and vanity, have your eye on the coloured shoe and the smart sash. You have the reins in your hand when these are given ; let them be firmly held.

Mother ! let your offspring be brought up with integrity. The housebreaking burglar was once a pilfering child ; even though he be your own, if uncorrected, he may become a burglar. The thought is enough to awaken your slumbering vigilance. Watch, detect, pursue, bring back and reclaim the young wanderer from the path of unrighteousness. Never mind how trifling the error may appear, for "sin is no trifle." It is the seed that may become a tree ; the spark which may burst into a flame. A pin is a little thing ; but if taken by dishonesty, or denied through deceit, it may prove the forerunner of greater delinquencies. The pin may be followed by the currant jam, the copper coin, and the silver shilling. Have you never read of the thief at the gallows biting off his mother's ear, for not reproving him when he stole the horn book in his youth ? Neglect not the lesson he sets forth ; take your beloved one in hand betimes. He now loves you and fears you. You have the reins in your hand ; hold them as you would hold your life.

What passion is more common, or more difficult to control, than anger ? It has alienated the child from the parent, and

the parent from the child. It has spoken words that ought never to be heard; and performed deeds which ought never to be done. It has taken away the precious life and plunged families which before were at peace, into the depths of extreme distress. Mother, gently restrain the fiery eye and angry tongue of your dear one; stay him in his unruliness, and melt him with your tenderness. He is now a bending osier, let him not become as a knotted oak. You may now master him, manage him, and render him tractable. Lose not the opportunity. The reins are in your hand; it will be your fault if you let them go.

Mother! If you really love your little one, (and who can doubt it?) give it the best proof of your affection, by training it up for heaven. Without piety the wealth of the world is dross; without the fear of the Lord, the knowledge of the world is vain. Keep away from your dwelling the poison of infidelity. One bad companion may lead your little one to think lightly of God's holy word. The reading of one bad book may make him a doubter, a sceptic, an unbeliever, an infidel; when otherwise he might become a child of God. From such a fearful calamity as this, do your utmost to defend him. While he is young he cannot resist your influence rightly used in dependence on God; you have every advantage over him. You have the reins in your hand, and bitterly will you repent it if you let them go.

To sum up all, fond mother: if the tearing of a butterfly's wing may be the beginning of a career of cruelty; a childish deceit the forerunner of falsehood, and the love of a coloured shoe the germ of pride; if the purloining of a pin may be the commencement of a course of dishonesty; the unchecked passion of a moment, the hotbed of anger; and the reading of a bad book the origin of a life of infidelity; can you be too vigilant, too prayerful, or too solicitous for the well-being of your child, who, being weak, is surrounded with strong temptations? Up, mother, with the watchful eye of love, and all the energies of body and mind, to protect your beloved one from approaching evil. Bring not sorrow and unavailing remorse on your own heart by neglect. Be wise betimes, save your darling from the beginnings of evil, commending him to the care of God through Christ; as yet you have the reins in your own hand, once loose them, and you may lose them for ever.

G. M.

THE END OF THE STORY.

"Now, dear girls, be ready in ten minutes, and we shall have our walk before anything can detain us," said Mrs. Lorimer, folding her work, and preparing to set the example to her two daughters, one of whom was diligently engaged in painting a rare flower, which drooped over a glass before her, and the other in reading.

"Laura, dear, I shall be ready first," whispered Ellen, as she covered the drawing, and closed her paint-box; but Laura did not, or seemed not to hear.

"Perhaps you do not wish to walk this morning, Laura," said her mother.

Laura looked up with a vacant countenance, but at length gradually comprehending what was said, she coloured, and glanced again at her book, measuring the unread pages with her eye.

"Oh, mamma, if you will be so very kind as to excuse me this morning, I should be so glad; I want to finish this very interesting book, and really I cannot enjoy anything until I know the end of it."

"Oh, I will tell it to you, if you like," cried Ellen, playfully, "so do come with us."

"No, no, no! not for the world," exclaimed Laura, with a face of alarm; "and I would rather not go out now, dear mamma, unless you desire it."

"Certainly, then, my dear, you shall remain with your book, on one condition, which is, that you do not read another of the kind for a very long time."

"Oh, that is easily promised," replied Laura, smiling, "for I should seek long for a story so intensely interesting as this."

Mrs. Lorimer smiled and left the room with Ellen, whereupon, Laura, greatly pleased at this unexpected indulgence, prepared for the luxury of reading, during at least two hours, without interruption. Her elbows mounted the table, her head resting upon one hand, while the other kept watch at the corner of the leaves ready to turn them over in the most expeditious manner, to the quick eyes that were eagerly devouring their contents.

At the end of two hours the dinner-bell rang.

"I wish there were no dinners," peevishly muttered Laura, as she was now compelled to move, and to join her mother and sister in the dining-room.

"I suppose you are not hungry, but we are," said Mrs. Lorimer, as Laura hastily entered with a flushed cheek, and a discontented air. "We have had a charming walk. Have you finished your book, my dear?"

"Not quite, mamma, but it will not occupy me much longer. What beautiful characters it describes, mamma."

"I think the author intends that we should do more than admire them, Laura, that we should try to imitate them."

Laura fully understood her mother's allusion, but she thought it required an immense amount of self-denial to manifest no annoyance, when dinner, such vulgar bodily indulgence, intrudes upon the intellectual enjoyments of literary taste; and her dinner was soon despatched. In time—and Laura inwardly thought everybody provokingly slow that day—the meal was concluded; and she hastened to her book, while Mrs. Lorimer resumed her work, and Ellen her pencil, and there was a long silence.

In the midst of this apparent calm, a storm broke forth. Laura's heart had for some time been beating violently, and a few hot tears had coursed over her flushed cheek, when, suddenly rising from her seat, she seized the book, and dashed it upon the sofa, where, fortunately, the violence of its impetus was softly expended among the cushions. Mrs. Lorimer started, and pricked her finger with the needle, and Ellen started too, and dropped her camel's hair pencil, full of shady green, upon the delicate pink petal of the beautiful flower.

Both looked up in dismay; and Laura was instantly recalled to a sense of propriety; but her feelings were too highly excited to be restrained, and rushing from the room, she indulged in a passionate fit of tears.

Mrs. Lorimer made no remark over the bleeding finger, and Ellen patiently set about extracting, if possible, the terrible blot from her drawing, of which she felt some hope, when Laura, considerably recovered, returned.

"Dear mamma," she said, "I beg your pardon for acting so very childishly, and I am so sorry, Ellen, for spoiling your pretty flower; I hope you will forgive me;—but surely I never felt so angry in my life before."

"With whom, Laura?" asked her mother.

"With the author of that book, mamma. first, I begin with myself for having allowed it to absorb so much feeling of which it is utterly unworthy. It is barbarous and abominable to make it end in such a manner."

"But if it is true?" gently pleaded Ellen.

"It cannot be true, I do not believe a word of it. It is most shamefully disappointing, after enjoying and sympathizing in the history of such a character, to find it adorned with such loveliness only to be laid in the tomb."

"The character did not go to the tomb," said Mrs. Lorimer; "she 'being dead yet speaketh,' and the fragrance of that self-denying piety will long perfume the atmosphere in which it was acquired and exercised."

"But you know what I mean, mamma. However, I am determined to think no more about it. It is the best way to disbelieve what one does not like."

"It is an easy refuge for a weak mind certainly, my dear; but, nevertheless, the story is true, and the end is to me the most interesting part of it."

"Then you must be tired of the world, mamma," said Laura, "to like death to be the end of a story. If I had known it I never would have read it; and you, Ellen, might have told me. You know I hate stories that end badly."

"But I do not think it ends badly," said Ellen. "I thought such a death, so full of hope and joy and peace, the happiest end that could be. When I read a story that leaves people rich and young and beautiful and happy upon earth, I know it must come to an end after all; the beauty must fade, the riches may vanish away, and old age and sickness will come, and death too at last—it is the real end of that part of the story. But when I read of one like this young Christian, in the midst of all her goodness and beauty and usefulness, taken safe home, welcomed into the joy of her Lord, I know she will have no more change, her happiness is enduring, sorrow and sighing have fled away, and there is no more curse. The question of eternity, as well as time, is settled for her for ever."

Laura looked anxiously at her sister as she spoke with animation and warmth, and then resumed her objections.

"But still it is unnatural for people to grow up, educated and gifted to adorn society, and just as they are beginning to be useful and valued, to be called away. We know the aged must die, and we are not shocked at that."

"It is good to be ready for the end of the story, dear Laura, whether it occur at one score or three," said her mother; "but do you not think that where earth offers many attractions, and admiring friends surround the object of their love, the faith must be strong, the love sincere, the hope well-founded, that is willing to resign every earthly promise, and

deems it 'far better to depart, and to be with Christ?' Thus does God sometimes glorify his own name, and manifest the power of the love of Christ, in young believers. To be ready to die when there is nothing left worth living for, is no great tribute to the 'pleasures which are at God's right hand;' but to count all things loss for Jesus' sake, and to feel that husband, children, property, rank, fame, and whatever else the world contains, are as nothing in comparison with him, is the more acceptable tribute of a redeemed sinner, and the victorious achievement of Divine grace."

"Well but, mamma, only remember the exquisite misery of those who are left to mourn such a loss. I cannot bear to think of it."

"That is the saddest part of it, assuredly; but observe the bow in the cloud. There are blessed words wherewith Christian mourners must be comforted. Resurrection and reunion are thoughts that overleap the grave; and while love conquers selfishness, hope tenderly helps to dissipate sadness, and thus again God is glorified, and his dear children, though chastened, are sanctified."

"It is all true, I dare say, mamma, but nothing can reconcile me to the end of the story."

"Nor any one, perhaps, who reads merely for amusement rather than for profit," replied Mrs. Lorimer. "Do you remember a beautiful story we read, not long since, in which a character most exquisitely delineated, and intensely interesting, becomes the object of envy and persecution, and after being hunted through scenes of extraordinary difficulty and danger, is at last made the victim of treachery and revenge?"

"Oh, no, mamma, you mistake, I cannot have read it, and if you will tell me the name of the book, I will take care not to read it too. I detest injustice—and did it succeed in this case?"

"Yes, the hero of the story, the finest character that ever pen described, was condemned and executed."

"Executed! Oh, mamma, how shocking!"

"Surely you remember it, my dear. And had death been the end of that story, it would have been melancholy indeed."

"Why, mamma? I thought you said he was executed. He could not come to life again, I suppose."

"Yes, he did."

"Mamma!"

"You did not throw your Bible across the room with indignation, when you read the sad story of the sufferings of Jesus, Laura."

"Ah, mamma, I see what you mean now. But we are always taught that it was right and voluntary suffering, different from anything that could happen to another."

"And that is true—'Thus it behoved Christ to suffer;' but it was human cruelty and malice that effected it, and it was a tender human heart, and a weak human frame that writhed under it. Yet we often read that history unmoved. I am afraid our sensibilities are not very keen after all, Laura. Sentimentality is too often mistaken for sensibility."

Laura was silent, but in the absence of her sister she renewed the subject.

"Do you know, mamma," said she, "I could not help feeling anxious about Ellen to-day, when she was speaking of death. It is not natural for one so young to have such thoughts."

"It is not natural for any one, dear Laura. When a sinner, young or old, is so enabled to grasp the scriptural truths of eternal life through faith in Christ, it is by the supernatural teaching of the Holy Spirit. It is proof of a change of heart, a turn in the tide of human hopes and affections which no other power can effect. If you seek this transforming power, dear Laura, you will yet esteem the end of life's story but a transfer of its hero from doubtful and uncertain joys, at best, to everlasting, undisappointing scenes of blessedness; nay, were our beloved Ellen herself chosen to receive fulness of joy in heaven, instead of conferring much more happiness on earth, you would be comforted by the true Comforter who takes of the things of Jesus, and shows to mourners the consequence of his resurrection, that because he rose, we shall rise also; where the Head goes the members follow, and that temporary separation is but the prelude to eternal reunion."

"Mamma, it would be dreadful to think of losing Ellen," said Laura, with tears in her eyes.

"Very painful, my love, I own," said the mother, softly; "but as our days, so shall our strength be. We are not called to it yet. She may be spared to adorn the doctrine she believes, on earth; but whether or not—'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Let us cultivate acquaintance with Him who comforts in sorrow all whom he saves from sin, and believe that the choicest end of a sinner's story leaves

him or her singing the song of praise before the throne of God and the Lamb."

B. S.

WHAT ARE YOU LIVING FOR?

ALMOST every man has some great object whose attainment he deems specially desirable, and to secure which he puts forth his best effort. There may be others which he tries to secure as well; but he has commonly some one to which he gives the pre-eminence over all beside.

Thousands live for pleasure. Nothing has any attraction for them which does not promise pleasure, and they abhor everything which withdraws their attention from its pursuit. Business is irksome; they never open a book, except it be to while away an hour which hangs heavily on their hands; and though they might be very glad to secure the great prizes of life, they cannot make up their minds to sacrifice a single enjoyment to obtain them. They are those of whom the psalmist speaks, the "many" who are perpetually asking "Who will show us any good?" The social party, the convivial meeting, the ball-room, the theatre, and places more questionable than any of these, are the scenes where such persons may be found, and in which they are most at home.

Others are eager to be rich; and there is no toil and no self-denial from which they will shrink, if they are likely to be rewarded by wealth.

Another class are ambitious of distinction. They want others to admire and praise them. The sweetest music to which they can listen is the music of their fellow-creatures' applause. The circle in which that applause is sought may sometimes be very limited, and sometimes it may be wide as the world; but the principle is in every case the same. The youth who eagerly embraces every opportunity of displaying to those with whom he associates, whatever accomplishment he may possess of wit, or conversational power, or song; the scholar panting for literary fame; and the soldier seeking glory where fields are won—may alike be actuated, as the grand motive of their being, by this desire for the notice and approbation of their fellow-men.

It may be, that some reader may feel that he belongs to one of the classes which have just been described; or perhaps he may be conscious that it is his desire to secure as much as he can, not only of pleasure but also of wealth and distinction too. There have been those who have combined them all, and he thinks he may do the same: at all events, he will try.

We should like to put the question to such a man, and to put it in such a way as to lead him to ponder it very carefully—"Do you think that you were made for such ends as these?—that God gave you life, and intellect, and the susceptibility of happiness, and the influence you possess, just that you might enjoy pleasure, or get rich, or secure applause? Do you think he intended you to live supremely, as the great object of your life, for any one of these, or even for all of them combined? It is quite true that he intended us to secure much enjoyment, even from things that perish with the using; quite true that earthly prosperity is described as a blessing in the word of God itself; and quite true that the same word represents 'a good name' as 'rather to be chosen than great riches.'" But the exclusive pursuit of these things is sure to contract the mind, is a perversion of its noble powers, and will inevitably lead to what is most sinful.

A great and good man who lived in the beginning of last century, Jonathan Edwards, drew out for himself a series of resolutions, one of which was this: "Resolved never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor see nor suffer it, if I can possibly avoid it." In forming that resolution he only did what was right; for an inspired apostle says,—“Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” It was the great object of Him who is our great example; for when he looked back on his course as it was just completed, he said, “I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

We may glorify God. We cannot do anything which shall, in the slightest degree, increase his essential glory; but we can recognise the excellences of his character as he has revealed himself; we can render to him the service and the praise which are thus due on account of those excellences; and we can induce others to do the same. He who would glorify God must begin by believing his gospel; there must then be obedience to all his commands; the formation of a character which shall be the transcript of his own; the devout and habitual study of his works and his word; and the presentation of sincere and reverential worship. Then, too, we must take that gospel in which there is the brightest manifestation of his glory, and seek to bring beneath its power the souls of all who are still “without God in the world.”

It is right—our duty—that we should thus seek God's glory. He who made us, who has redeemed us, who has

bestowed upon us all the blessings we enjoy, and who is infinitely great and good, demands it. It is the end at which he himself aims in all his works—the chief end of creation—the end for which he gave his Son to die for us; and he requires us, as intelligent and responsible beings, to keep it in view as the great object of our existence.

Men's characters are formed by the thoughts with which they are conversant, and by the ends which they pursue. The man who thinks about nothing but trifles, and who never aims at anything great, will become daily more and more contracted in all his views and sentiments. On the contrary, he who is constantly seeking the accomplishment of noble and elevated objects, partakes, in a greater or less degree, of the greatness of these objects. The glory of God is the highest object at which we can possibly aim, and there is no motive which can impart to the soul such an elevation and dignity. The characters which we most admire, as approaching most nearly the very beau-ideal of human excellence, are those of the men who have been most exclusively actuated by a concern for the glory of God.

We spoke of the love of pleasure, of wealth, and of honour, as the great objects by which men were actuated. Let no one think that whilst the Bible condemns those as the objects of primary pursuits, and enjoins, instead, that which seems to require an entire self-forgetfulness, it therefore denies us everything that is likely to minister enjoyment. We cannot live to the glory of God, without securing the highest happiness of which we are capable. There is the approval of a good conscience; there is the satisfaction which springs from the thought of the benefits we confer on our fellow-men, and there is the joy which is produced by the persuasion that God himself regards us with approbation. Though we should secure none of the wealth of this world, we may thus be rich indeed. And it is his promise, "Them that honour me I will honour." He honours them now, but there are beyond the grave distinctions and honours which will endure for ever. We live most truly for ourselves, when we live most entirely for God. That man, indeed, scarcely knows what it is to live, who has not begun to live to him.

S. G.

A WORD IN SEASON.

AMONGST the gifts bestowed on man, as means of advancing the kingdom of God on earth, perhaps there is none more use-

ful than the capacity for saying a word in season. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it!" says Solomon, Prov. xv. 23. Indeed it is a truth so evident that few contradict or deny it, however they may differ as to when the due season is.

Mr. O—, when on a tour with his friend Mr. B— through various parts of England, felt frequently surprised to hear him quote Scripture, or playfully criticise, contradict, and bring to the test of Scripture, expressions used by persons they casually met in public conveyances or elsewhere. They had been friends for many years, and were both faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unity of faith and principle was in fact the foundation of their friendship, and they joined in many efforts to benefit their fellow-men in temporal things, as well as by spreading the knowledge of salvation. They were quite aware, however, that even two persons cannot always think precisely alike on every subject, therefore their friendship was never interrupted by the vain effort of trying by disputation to convince each other of mistake; but on this occasion Mr. O— could not refrain from remonstrating with Mr. B—, saying, that so far from thinking it right thus to bring forward Scripture to those who had no reverence for it, it seemed to him like making light of sacred things, a want of due reverence for the sacred text, a casting pearls before swine.

"But," answered Mr. B—, with a smile, "the proof that it is not so is, that none have turned again to rend me. Have you heard a scoff or a sneer follow anything I have said?"

"No," answered Mr. O—, "but there is something in your manner which forbids that. You have such an air of simple kindness and good humour when you speak thus, that I can scarcely fancy any one resenting it. But what good does it do? for that is the real question. What do you expect from it?"

"I certainly hope," answered Mr. B—, "that a word thus spoken may prove a word in season. I acknowledge that I have ere now met with ridicule in my attempts; though not since we have been travelling together; but what of that? Truth will bear the test of ridicule; indeed this may do good by making the truth more evident, and I am not easily put out of countenance. I consider a believer to be, as the apostle says, an 'epistle known and read of all men,' or, at least, he should be so; and this is my way of making the superscription legible. A letter completely sealed cannot be read."

"The words you quote certainly apply to all Christians, but I think these must be read and known by their general conduct in life, not by a few passing words."

"I do not dispute the influence that the life and conversation of the believer must have on those who witness them; but when brought into momentary intercourse with those I may never meet again,* and who are evidently ignorant of the way of salvation, I think it a pity to lose the opportunity of calling their attention to the one thing needful. It may be that they have never yet heard of Christ as a Saviour, and a word thus spoken may rouse, if it were only from curiosity, to further inquiry, and even that is desirable."

"As to knowing nothing of the plan of salvation, I consider it almost an impossible case; and if it does exist, it must be by the most wilful blindness, and those thus ignorant are not likely to listen to you, and your words are too few to convince them if they did. But I really cannot conceive any one in England so utterly unacquainted with the gospel message as your speech supposes them to be."

"Well, my dear friend," said Mr. B—, "if I do not convince you of the propriety of my mode of acting, neither do you convince me that I am mistaken. I have met very many who, though they may have heard of Christ, seem to have altogether mistaken the gospel message, and, instead of considering it a message of love and salvation, regard it on the contrary only as one of judgment and condemnation; in short, as if it were a message to the righteous, not to the sinner; and I long to speak to such as if I were an ambassador from Christ, to say to them, 'Be ye reconciled to God.' 'Turn ye, turn ye: why will ye die?' I cannot confine the embassy to ordained ministers. I look upon all believers as envoys."

"You certainly convince me that, with your feelings, you are right in the course you pursue," said Mr. O—; "but I must look upon the manner in which you are enabled to speak, as a peculiar gift, and I do not consider others called to do the same. Perhaps you may hear of some to whom your little word has been blessed."

"I have no hope of it; it is unlikely I ever shall hear more of any of these mere passers by." And there the subject dropped.

It was not very long after these friends had returned to one of the midland counties, where they lived in the same neighbourhood, that Mr. B— attended a fair on business. As he was examining some cheeses at a stall, he observed a countryman earnestly looking at him, with a strange agitated expression of countenance. He had a sort of confused recollection of having seen the man before, the more so when he raised his hat and bowed to him.

"Do you wish to speak to me, good man?" asked Mr. B—.

"I greatly wish to speak to you, sir," said the man, "but not in this public place. Oh, sir, if you would do me the honour to enter my cottage—it is not far from this—you would confer a great favour on me. It is just dinner-time, and my wife must be expecting me. How she will rejoice to see you under our roof!"

"I cannot recollect you, my friend," answered Mr. B—, "but you seem to know me. What is your name? Where have we met before?"

"Oh, sir, I cannot tell you in this place, but if you will condescend to enter my cottage I will tell you all."

"This is something very mysterious," said Mr. B—; "but I do not object. Step on then, I will follow you."

They walked a short way down a lane, and reached a small cottage shaded by tall trees. A narrow path through a small garden, rich in the common sorts of flowers, led to the door of the cottage; and the man going on first, entered it, saying, "Mary! here is the gentleman I have so often told you of, and that we scarcely hoped ever to see. Let us be thankful."

A pleasing-looking young woman, with a baby in her arms, came forward to curtsy to Mr. B—. All within doors looked neat and comfortable; and when they were seated, Mr. B— again asked the man where they had met before?

Ere he answered the question, he took a Bible from a shelf, and opening it, pointed to the first verse of the fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah, and then said, "Do you remember, sir, repeating these words to a robber that you met ten years ago on a wild common in Yorkshire. I am that man."

Mr. B— now suddenly recollected that, some years before, when travelling in the north of England, he had been walking across a common, when he was stopped by a young man, who presented a pistol, and demanded his purse. It was at a time when highway robbery was not very uncommon, at least it was a more frequent crime than it is now. Notwithstanding the action, Mr. B— thought the robber had not a hardened expression of countenance, and quietly giving him his purse, he said, "My poor fellow, it is scarcely worth endangering your life for such a trifle. Are you not aware that the road you are going leads to the gallows? When condemned by man, cry to the Saviour, even then he may hear you; remember that 'the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear.'"

The man now told Mr. B— that that had been his first

attempt at robbery ; that he had been brought up to industry, but that losing his parents when very young, he had fallen into bad company ; that gambling soon reduced him to want, and that in the society he frequented he had got so accustomed to hear the deeds of highwaymen spoken of as bold and dashing, and their escapes recounted with interest, and listened to with curiosity, if not applause, that he had begun to overlook the sin of robbers, dazzled by the admiration of his companions for these deeds of daring, and the courage they thought displayed in them ; that his mind had really become bewildered and confused, and being in want of money he had resorted to that mode of getting it.

“ I do not, sir,” he continued, “ say this to justify myself, but to trace my course of guilt, and to account for the force with which your words struck me. But it was as much your manner and tone, I believe, as the words themselves that arrested me in what you so truly called the road to the gallows. You walked on ; and I stood rooted to the spot, with your purse in my hand, undecided what to do, and before I could recover distinctness of thought sufficient to resolve on returning your purse, you were beyond my reach. I cannot account for the sudden revulsion of my feelings, and my dislike to meeting any of the companions whose society had led me so far into actual crime ; but I walked on slowly, to avoid entering the town before dusk, and as I went along reflected on the means of escaping them altogether and returning to the paths of honesty and industry.

“ On entering the town, I perceived a church open, and lighted for evening service, and I turned into it, more to hide from those I now feared to meet, than from any wish for better things ; but the sermon came home to my heart and deepened the impression made by your words. I recollect the words I heard on that day better than many I have listened to with attention since. The subject of the lecture that evening was, the return of the prodigal to his father’s house ; and the preacher dwelt much on the willingness of the father to receive him, having seen him when he was yet a great way off. He quoted a good deal from other parts of Scripture, particularly from what I now know was the 103rd Psalm, and I felt as if every word was spoken to me individually ; and, though blindly and ignorantly, yet I did join in the prayers which concluded the service. I left the church determined to die of want rather than touch a farthing of your money. However, by selling my pistols, and some few things I possessed, I gathered enough

to save me from absolute hunger, and early the next morning left the town.

"It was harvest time, and so many hands were wanted to gather in the corn that farmers did not stop to make inquiries as to the character of the men they employed, and I got work as I went through the country. For some time I felt so restless and miserable, that hard work and change of place were rather a relief to me than a toil. On Sundays I attended public worship, but the sermons I heard did not give me that hope and confidence that had entered my heart whilst listening to the preacher who described the father yearning over his repentant son; on the contrary, they gave me a feeling of condemnation; but often, and often, your words recurred to me, 'The Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save;' and your exhortation to cry to him even from the foot of the gallows.

"I had soon saved money enough to buy a Bible; and in reading it, gradually found peace in the assurances of Christ's willingness to save sinners. When I found the very words you had spoken to me, I cannot, sir, describe how they affected me. I had learned to rejoice that his hand was not shortened, that it had reached even to me, and that he had put away, by the sacrifice of himself, those iniquities which had separated between sinners and God.

"At last in this county I found constant employment, and gradually got on, until I was in circumstances sufficiently easy to allow me to think of marrying. When I found my Mary disposed to listen to my suit, I knew I ought not to keep anything secret from her, and, though I did it in trembling, told her that I was a sinner beyond most men, that I was in fact a highway robber, and that if she rejected me, I could only say she had reason to do so. When she had heard all, she replied, 'that the Saviour received the thief on the cross, and how could she refuse one who had never sinned against her, and who, she felt, was, for Christ's sake, already pardoned for his sin against God.' So, sir, about three years ago we were married, and I gave your purse into my wife's keeping. We hoped, until lately, we should find the owner, but I had begun to give up the expectation, when I met you to day at the fair. You now know, sir, why I could not tell you in that public spot, where we had met before; and I almost wonder how I have the face to do it at all; but I hope it is in the spirit in which Joshua exhorted Achan to confess his sin, 'To give glory to God.'"

Mr. B— did not refuse to receive back his purse, assuring the poor man that this was one of the happiest moments of his life ; such pleasure did he feel in having been instrumental in leading him to Christ. He felt while he spoke that one who had given such evidence of conversion should be received as a brother in Christ.

On hearing of this unexpected meeting with the reformed thief, Mr. O— acknowledged that it gave proof that a word thus unexpectedly spoken may forcibly strike the conscience, and rouse thoughts which lead to good “ And indeed,” he added, “ I do not well see why I doubted it ; for speaking of mere human words, the poet says :—

‘ Oh, many a dart at random sent
Finds aim the archer little meant ;
And many a word at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart that’s broken.’

If we do not deny this, why should we doubt the force of the inspired word, of which the Lord himself says, ‘ It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.’ ”

E. M. P.

MY YOUTHFUL COMPANIONS.

Friend after friend departs :
Who hath not lost a friend ?
There is no union here of hearts
That finds not here an end ;
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying none were blest.

THOUGH I am not an old man, having barely seen fifty summers, yet I have lived long enough to have seen great changes in the world, and still greater vicissitudes among those with whom I commenced the race of life. The very locality where we roamed in the hilarity of boyish mirth, and bounded over the greensward in our many pastimes and games, is now occupied with suburban villas, and rows of human habitations. Some of the once merry and light-hearted boys have now care-worn countenances, and preside as the heads of families of their own. One or two, alas ! have sunk away from all that is respectable in society, and correct in morals, and, in midnight haunts, have become prematurely old. A few have entirely disappeared, either to carry on their struggles with the world,

in distant climes, with the fond hope of being the founders of their families' fortunes; or have passed into the eternal world, having finished their probation in time, and are either now among the "redeemed," or companions of "the lost," for ever.

I will sketch the history of three of my youthful companions, who have "gone hence," for your edification, dear reader, and my own good. They attended the same school, went through the same routine of instruction for several years, and amidst all I have passed through since, these early reminiscences cause me now to feel as if forty years of life had gone back, and I was once more young, preparing my daily tasks in the old school, and sitting at the well-worn desks.

The first of the three that I shall bring before you, was THEODORE E—. There was something indescribably pleasing in his manner, which won golden opinions from all the boys, and he became a general favourite. Yet he was no time-server, for he maintained with firmness those principles of religion and good conduct, which it had been the careful study of his excellent parents to inculcate, and E— had been the subject of their united prayers. Though an only child, yet he had not been spoiled, and there was submissiveness to his teachers in his manner, as well as the most gentle behaviour to his companions. In our frequent disputes, many a wrong-headed boy would submit to his decision, and thus an incipient quarrel would end, without those encounters, which are so sad to witness either in boys or men, when brutal violence prevails rather than the dictates of sober reason, and the kinder feelings of the human heart. E—, who was my senior, left school to enter on the busy scenes of commercial life; and it became evident, that he had, through Divine grace, imbibed in the days of his youth a preference for those things which are not confined to this world, but are eternal.

The after-life of Mr. E— proved that he had been made a partaker of the saving and renewing grace of the gospel, and he dedicated his time to the service of Him who had done such great things for his soul. It is pleasing when we see men in influential positions in society, devoting not only their substance, but their talents, to the service of Christ. God often prospers such characters beyond their reasonable expectations in worldly affairs, and their business has a sanctifying effect on their minds, when they are led to see and acknowledge that the hand of Him "who maketh rich" is with them, whilst

they feel that they are only stewards of the wealth which he has placed in their hands, or under their control, for a time. Such men have happily been raised up at times, and Thornton, the merchant-prince of England's capital, showed in the last century how it was possible to conduct a large mercantile firm, and devote time, influence, and gold, to the various religious and philanthropic objects of the day.

Mr. E—'s circumstances were not by any means so affluent as the noble-example alluded to; yet the progress of his firm in respectability became a matter of astonishment to many a sordid and worldly-minded trader, who, on looking back on life, found it only presented an unbroken scene of worldliness, and deep anxiety to obtain wealth; no time ever given to religious and benevolent institutions; no attempt ever made to lessen the amount of ignorance and vice, visible even in the immediate neighbourhoods of their splendid warehouses, though the claims of charity had repeatedly been urged to loosen their purse-strings, but in vain. Theodore E— was not made of such materials, for it could be said of him, that "the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him; and that he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

This excellent man died a few years since, and his end was indeed "peace." Relying on that Saviour whose atonement he had so dearly prized, and of whose righteousness he truly felt he had been made a partaker, he calmly met death, not as a messenger of wrath, but of mercy, and looked forward to heaven as his final home, where he would remain, not for the space of six and forty years, but for ever and ever.

JOHN W—. This early companion of mine had, what may be called, a confiding spirit. He could scarcely be brought to think wrong of any one, and was disposed to put his trust in, and give credence to boys of a designing turn of mind. Hence he was often mixed up with breaches of discipline, and frequent were the scrapes into which the more vicious of our youthful throng got him. It is well when the mind of a boy has been led, through religious training, to distinguish right from wrong, and not to blindly follow his associates in an evil course. The example and decision of Joseph, as recorded in Scripture, cannot be too early impressed on the youthful mind; and when placed in circumstances of peculiar trial and temptation, not only amidst the freshness of early days, but during life's progress, the feeling will be—"How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

W—'s bias of mind led his friends to procure his admission into the naval service of his country, when he had completed his education, and we only saw each other at distant intervals. In the course of time, the midshipman was promoted to a lieutenancy, and became an able officer. In the discharge of his duties, he visited various countries, and having naturally a good constitution he retained his health, whether in tropical climes, or the frozen regions of the north. When we met I found he had been a keen observer of nature and art, the people and their customs, in the countries he had visited, and few could surpass him in giving a graphic account of what he had seen and heard. His manners were gentlemanly; but, alas! he was not what the word of inspiration describes a Christian to be. It was evident that he had not received that "renewal," without which, let a man be ever so amiable and excellent in other respects, he "is dead while he liveth."

We spent many hours together, during his last visit to his relatives; and I tried to lead his mind to the consideration of heavenly and eternal things, but it appeared, from his manifest indifference to the conversations, that it was by no means acceptable or agreeable to him. We parted not to meet again, and when thinking of poor W—, as the frigate to which he belonged was sailing to a remote part of the globe, I was painfully impressed that he was only living according to the course of this evil world, having for his chosen companions those who were unfriendly to the sacrifices which real religion requires, in surrendering besetting sins, and deeply cherished vices and all iniquity. Two years afterwards he was unhappily drowned, whilst returning from an excursion on shore. A sudden squall arose, and the small boat in which W— was proceeding to the vessel was upset, and my poor friend alone lost his life, whilst the others, who were with him, were saved. A widowed mother and fond sisters mourned his loss, and many a tear flowed at the remembrance that—

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one,
He lies where pearls lie deep;
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

EDWARD B—. He continued my companion for several years after leaving school, and I highly prized his friendship. There was great frankness and openness of character in him as a boy, and this became properly mellowed as time passed on. Being designed for the medical profession, he

was entered as a pupil to the infirmary of our town, which, as a medical school, was in high repute. At that period there was more than a suspected leaning to scepticism on the part of medical men generally, and many a promising youth became entangled in the sophistry of infidelity, whilst the more vicious gladly sought in it a shelter for their vices, laughing and scoffing at revealed religion, and denying man's accountability to the Great First Cause of our life and being. The marvellous mechanism of the human frame, fearfully and wonderfully made, did not call forth aspiration to God on the part of such characters. Happily, by God's mercy, a better state of things arose, and many of the most distinguished and talented men took every opportunity of instilling into the minds of their pupils, in their private intercourse, and in their lectures at the hospitals and schools, their firm adherence to the doctrines of revealed religion, and the truth of the Christian scheme. Of late years, Dr. Hope, as well as other equally distinguished men, have exemplified how it was possible to maintain a close walk with God, amidst the deepest researches into science, and the profoundest professional skill.

B— was greatly tried by one of his fellow-pupils, who held views completely inimical to revealed religion, and the dictates of sober reason. Happily, through grace, B—'s mind had been strengthened by judicious parental advice; and his own convictions had led him to become acquainted with the external evidences of the Christian faith. He diligently perused such works as Bishop Watson's "Apology for the Bible," and Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," and was able to answer the subtle sophisms which his fellow-student was continually advancing. It is often found that a corrupt course of conduct, and a depraved heart, will lead to the entertaining of infidel views, whilst the slightest attempt has never been made to examine the word of God, in connexion with the array of external evidence in its favour by the noble phalanx of defenders of the outworks of the Christian citadel; proving by their masterly reasoning, that revealed religion is not of man's invention, but according to the will of that God who "in the beginning made heaven and earth." Edward passed through the "furnace" of persecution and trial, for such it was to him for a time, and, through Divine influence, he realized the internal evidence for the believer's faith, by being satisfied that he had been "created anew in Christ Jesus" by the Holy Spirit. During his residence afterwards at one of the metropolitan hospitals, he was bold and unflinching

in maintaining his religious views, and through his consistent example and influence he was honoured by God, in being the instrument in his hands of rescuing from the vortex of unbelief a fellow-student, who afterwards became an exemplary Christian, and eminent in his profession.

When Mr. B— commenced practice in a large and populous city at a distance, I had but few opportunities of seeing him. A pretty regular correspondence, and an occasional visit, were all we could manage, though from our earliest recollections we had been more like brothers, or as such should be, than friends. In his profession he was greatly respected, and a few years of successful and skilful practice found him in the receipt of a good income. There was much suavity of manner in his bearing, displaying the Christian gentleman, and one who could properly feel for the sufferings that man is heir to in this lower world. This gave him additional influence in speaking a word in season among those who were relying on his acknowledged ability, as the healer of their bodily ailments. Of the sacred observance of the Lord's day he was a strenuous advocate, and no ill-timed arrangement, or postponed visits, required his attendance on the day of rest, but those that were absolutely necessary, during the intervals of his attendance at God's house. His religious character was one of great stability, not being carried about with every "wind of doctrine;" but having, through the grace of God, built on the rock Christ, he felt with one of the early Christian writers, that "The spiritual man is he who liveth by the Spirit, having his mind enlightened by him; having not only an innate human understanding; but, further, a spiritual understanding graciously bestowed on him, with which the Holy Spirit endues the minds of believers."

Mr. B— was called rather suddenly from this lower world, soon after he had passed his fortieth year; but he was not unprepared; he had, through Divine mercy, a supply of oil in his vessel, saving grace being rooted in his heart. The Bridegroom came: the man of God was found at his post, watching as those who know not when their Lord may come, and his sudden removal found him ready to live with that Saviour, whose servant he had been for so many years. The feeling of good old Wickliffe had been constantly on his mind during his active and useful life, "Except a Christian be united to Christ by grace, he hath not Christ the Saviour."

May you, dear reader, and the writer of these true sketches

increasingly feel that "time is short," and that we are rapidly hastening through this world to our everlasting destiny. If we have been enabled, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, to "put on Christ," happiness without the slightest alloy will be ours, when we cease to live here; but if Christ has been despised, and the soul neglected, our portion will be where there is "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

S. M.

DECISION FOR CHRIST.

AND can it be that thou art seeking still?
 Vain trifling soul, when wilt thou wisdom learn?
 Is it in vain that o'er the record vast
 Of a life-long experience thou hast pored,
 While on each several page the warning high
 So legibly, so deeply is impressed,
 "Love not the world, for it will pass away?"
 And wilt thou love it still? Ay, it is so,
 Else wherefore is that rapt and anxious brow?
 And when that gleam of brilliant sunlight came
 Across thy path, wherefore that eager haste
 To plant anew the seed of earthly joy,
 Which strikes no root, but withers like the gourd?

Take up the cross; it is not what it seems;
 And if it were, how couldst thou venture thus
 To pass it by? Perchance for thee it holds
 A precious balm, an unguent for thy soul.
 Throw down those treach'rous flowers, the stinging thorns
 Will pierce thee by and by; those sunny leaves
 Are dropping poison; cast them far away,
 Ere their benumbing influence steal thy soul.

Gird on thy sandals, take thy staff in hand;
 Now, Christian, for the toilsome hill again;
 No rest for thee, till thou the summit gain.
 Yet ere thou go, list to the promise true:
 An arm unseen shall guide thee on thy way;
 When faint and weary, strength shall be supplied:
 With living water shall thy thirst be quenched.
 And when the everlasting doors unfold
 Through which the King of glory entered in,
 Thy toil is ended,—thou mayst enter too.
 His kindly voice shall welcome thee within,
 And rest unbroken, joy without a cloud,
 Shall be thine everlasting portion there.

C. H.



MAY DAY.

"How bright and beautiful the morning is, and quite suited to this first day of the lovely month of May," said Anna, throwing up the sash of her window, and inhaling the breeze that came laden with sweets from the flower-garden beneath. "I think I will go to visit grandmamma: a walk through the fields would be delightful." And she set off, her spirits animated by the glow of health and youth, and her mind prepared to admire and enjoy everything.

Anna thought that she had never heard the birds sing so merrily, or seen the lambs frisk with such glee over the green turf as they did on this auspicious morning. "And it is," she thought, "only the beginning of enjoyment: the weather will become more settled and warmer every day: pretty as these spring flowers are, the summer blossoms which succeed them are far superior—then come the delicious fruits. People may talk of this world being a very bad and a very sad one, but to me it seems a very pleasant world, and its being so is a proof of the goodness of God. How nicely this is expressed in the book I was reading last night:—'Man is something more than an animal which wants lodging and food. He has an eye for the sublime and beautiful, and his Creator has provided his abode with ample materials for these nobler tastes. He has made it a world of fragrance and music—of brightness and symmetry—where the grand and the graceful—the awful and the lovely, rejoice together.' No wonder the psalmist should exclaim, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all,' Psa. civ. 24."

Pleased with herself for what she considered devotional feelings, Anna continued with light heart and step to wend her way, and did not observe that a cloud which had arisen in the western horizon, was fast increasing in size and darkness of hue, till the blue arch over head became obscured, and the landscape around her was no longer glowing with sunshine. "It is but a passing cloud," she thought; "the sun will soon be out again, and everything look more beautiful than ever."

A few drops now fell upon her face, and caused her to look about for shelter, but it was nowhere to be had. Then the distant roll of thunder was heard, and the rain began to fall heavily. After a few ineffectual efforts to save her dress, and the riband of her pretty spring bonnet from ruin, Anna got frightened in the apprehension of more serious evils. She was still at some distance from her grandmother's house, and no other was in the way: there might be another peal of thunder nearer than the first—there might be lightning, of which she was much afraid; and of her getting a severe wetting there could be no doubt, from which cold and illness might result.

How changed was everything around! The birds had stopped singing—the flowers hung their heavy heads, overcharged with rain—and the sportive lambs were cowering for shelter under the hedges. The charms of the rural scene were all gone, and it was so tiresome to walk through the wet grass, that poor Anna betook herself to the road, which was near. Even here her progress was slow, as a strong gale which blew right against her had sprung up, and much impeded her progress. Thus frightened, drenched with rain, and altogether in a sad plight, she arrived at length at her grandmother's dwelling.

The old lady was greatly distressed at seeing her condition. She made her, with due speed, take off her wet garments, get into a well-warmed bed, and take some hot wine and water. Anna, who had been fatigued as well as frightened by her disastrous excursion, fell into a sound sleep. On waking she found herself refreshed, and soon joined her grandmother beside a cheerful fire, which, May day though it was, looked attractive; for still all outside was gloom, verifying the poet's words that even at this genial season,—

"Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the bright morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless."

Anna gave her grandmother, by whom she was welcomed with an affectionate smile, an account of her walk, and of the thoughts and feelings which it had occasioned her.

"Well, my dear child," said the old lady, "perhaps it may not be unprofitable to view your little May-day adventure as if it were a type of your future life. You are now in the prime of youth and health; your path, like that on which your walk commenced this morning, strewed with flowers, and brightened by a cloudless sky, while hope permits you not to dream of changes. But blossoms will be blighted, and storms will gather as surely as they did to-day."

"A sad prospect, grandmamma; but how do you know that it will be realized?"

"It is the lot of humanity, my child—the consequence of sin. Trials, in some shape or other, will come; the question is, how shall we meet them?"

Anna looked thoughtful, and said, "I hope, when they do, I can say, Thy will be done. God is a loving Father, and sends sorrow in mercy."

"So his word declares, Anna, and so we profess to believe; but the difficulty is to feel that it really is so, when trial comes. You tell me that in gazing on the bright scenes around you this morning your heart glowed with love to the Creator, and a deep conviction that all his works were made in wisdom. Tell me, when the storm came on, did this feeling last, and give you courage to meet it?"

Anna coloured. "I was startled, grandmamma; it came suddenly, and I was trying to keep myself dry—and then looking for shelter—and in short I did not think —"

"Did not think of Him who sent it, my child? Now, would it not be well before the storms of life come, to ascertain that you are prepared for them; that you have really sought and found a refuge in Him who is 'as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land?' Isa. xxxii. 2."

Anna did not reply, but looked thoughtful, as if these words had made an impression on her mind. After a while her grandmother continued, "I too, dear child, have had my May day of youth and happiness, so far as this world can give it; and, just like yours this morning, it was soon overclouded, and, storms arose before I knew where to flee from them. Oh! Anna, I suffered a great deal;" and her voice trembled. "But praise be to the Lord, he taught me fully to

understand and feel the blessed truths which his Spirit has revealed for our unspeakable comfort, particularly in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, and I can clearly see that it was good for me to be afflicted."

"Well, grandmamma, I can easily comprehend," the young lady replied, "that when trials are over, and we are enabled to perceive the good which they produced, we may feel satisfied, or even thankful for them. But while the thunder peals, and the storm rages, and we are hurt and frightened, how is it that we can feel peace and comfort?"

"By faith, Anna; that faith in God's promises—in 'the immutability of his counsel'—which is as 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast,' Heb. vi. 19. Let us try habitually to exercise this child-like trust in our heavenly Father, remembering that he makes all things, little and great, work together for good to them that love him; even in a summer shower, Anna, and that which befel you to-day was little more: then, when tempests arise, a sense of safety will keep us in peace. As to a knowledge of how trials operate for good, it is not always vouchsafed to us in this life—probably we shall know hereafter: but even here we often can plainly perceive it."

"Dear grandmamma," Anna replied, "I believe I thought myself more advanced in the Christian course than I am—that I had more trust in God—more—" and she stopped, evidently humbled.

"My beloved Anna, if we are thinking more highly of ourselves in anything than we ought to think, it is well to find it out. But to return to what I was saying; in your little adventure this morning I am able even now to know distinctly that what was so unpleasant, operated for your temporal safety and welfare. And I trust I may hope it will do far more—that it has impressed a lesson on your young heart which will, with God's blessing, be useful through life.

"And now to explain myself. I had scarcely settled you to sleep after your arrival, when my neighbour, farmer Brown, walked in, a large club in his hand, and his countenance expressing alarm. 'You spoke to wife last night ma'am,' said he, 'about having sillabub for some young friends you expected this May day. I knew Miss Anna would be one of them, and I also knew that she often walks here across the fields. Now, ma'am, I have just heard that there is a terrible bull in one of the fields through which she would

come, and so I'm going to meet her as fast as I can.' I thanked him warmly, and told him of your arrival. He seemed extremely rejoiced, and then informed me that the animal had suddenly become quite furious, and had hurt two men & tried to catch it; so that your danger was indeed great, and you were saved from it by the storm which drove you off your pleasant flowery path through the fields, and obliged you to betake yourself to the common road."

Anna was much affected, and expressed deep thankfulness for this instance of providential care. "Never forget," said the old lady; "and when you cannot understand all the dispensations of your Father, remember that—

"Day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear;
And furnish us perhaps at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof that we, and our affairs,
Are part of a Jehovah's cares;
For God unfolds by slow degrees
The purport of his deep decrees;
Sheds every hour a clearer light,
In aid of our defective sight;
And spreads at length before the soul,
A beautiful and perfect whole."

E. F. G.

ROBERT THE SOLDIER.

DURING the war which was terminated at the peace of 1814, an English and a Prussian surgeon frequently met when attending the sick and wounded. Similarity of profession, and still more sympathy of mind and religious principle, gave rise to a friendship, which continued and strengthened when they quitted the army, and was kept up by frequent interchange of letters and occasional meetings. Dr. J— took the opportunity of the opening of the Great Exhibition in London, to urge his friend to visit him, and in his letter of invitation playfully added to other motives for his coming, that, in accordance with the principles and love of peace, Dr. K— professed he was bound to come over to a meeting that must, as Dr. J— thought, promote peace among nations even if friendship did not bring him. Dr. J— also made some inquiries respecting a soldier to whom his friend had alluded in a former letter. Dr. K— answered by the following letter, apparently thinking his friend was too sanguine in his hopes of peace.

“I accept your invitation, dear friend, with great pleasure, and hope to be with you at the opening of your Crystal Palace. We shall thus, in our elderly days, see a crowd of people of various and distant countries again assembled in one capital. What a glorious contrast to that we witnessed at the commencement of our friendship, when we entered Paris, you under Wellington and I under Blücher!

“Our love of peace and peaceful pursuits soon caused us both to quit the army and settle down to private practice, and God has blessed us in our efforts after professional success. As a lover of peace I must rejoice to see so many eagerly hasting to share in what I regard as a demonstration and symbol of peace amongst the nations, at least of Europe. At the same time, our admiration must not lead us to consider it more than outward and temporary peace; for except grace reign in the heart of man, the evil passions lie dormant but for a while, ready to burst forth and kindle into war and bloodshed at a slight spark of provocation. True peace, however, may reign in and keep tranquil the heart of the servant of God, even in the midst of war and bloodshed.

“Just before you and I first met, attending in that hospital where so many sick and wounded needed surgical assistance, I had proof of this in the case of the soldier Robert, about whom you inquire, and whose death has been present to my mind ever since hearing from you, as an exhibition of true peace when all around was warlike. As I walk through the village, or, mounted on my old grey horse, visit some distant patient, I often reflect on the scenes of former days, and sometimes forget myself and all around me, and fancy I hear the trumpet recalling the scattered troops, or the booming of cannon in the distance, and then suddenly start to recollection that peaceful scenes and rural sounds alone are before me; but for many days Robert has been the subject of these my reveries.

“When I joined my corps as an army surgeon, I found myself surrounded by young men, and as the war at that period was considered a war of liberation, many men of birth and education were glad to serve as private soldiers. There was such changing of men that I got acquainted with the features and appearance of many whose names I never learned. Some of these I have since met, settled as quiet citizens, who have recognised and addressed me. But you will think it curious that I should have formed a heartfelt friendship for one whose surname I do not even now know. ‘Robert’ was

the only name inscribed on his coffin when his remains were interred in a little village churchyard in France, far from his home and his friends, if he left any.

“Even a more experienced person than I then was must have been struck by the evident superiority of Robert, though in the dress of a private soldier. When gathered round the watch-fire of an evening, or on the march, his comrades considered him silent and somewhat melancholy, but I always found him cheerful and ready to converse. There was, however, something in his manner and appearance different from his fellow-soldiers. He was very young, and of a fresh and blooming complexion and soft expression of countenance, and always neat in his dress. His appearance gave rise to many jokes and jests, as that he was a young lady in disguise, that he need fear nothing, since even the enemy would not molest a tender girl, and so forth. But in a night attack on a battery defended by the French, he soon proved his manliness.

“When called to dress the wounds of the few who returned from the attack, I was surprised to find Robert amongst them; for the volunteer corps to which he was attached, I knew was not ordered there. But I soon learned that he and two others had asked permission to be of the number, and when the leader fell, Robert had taken the command and led on a body of men to storm the battery. He was as calm as ever when I spoke to him on the subject, and said he was glad of the opportunity of showing that a Christian soldier would not lag behind at a critical moment; that his two volunteer companions had fallen, so that it was his place to come forward. For his conduct his general promoted him on the spot, and he recovered from his wounds so quickly, that in a very short time he was able to leave the hospital wagon in which we carried the wounded, and mount his horse as lieutenant. All jokes and sarcasms now ceased, and his manners, which had been considered cold and reserved as a private, were courteous and unassuming as an officer; but I must say he did appear more open and friendly when promoted.

“Soon after this we were quartered in a little village where the inhabitants had already suffered so much from troops of all parties marching through it, that they were ill-disposed towards soldiers of any nation, and our general found it necessary to enforce the strictest discipline, to prevent our soldiers from acts of violence in revenge for the unwillingness of the villagers to supply them. The following evening, as

we gathered round the fires to refresh ourselves from the stores that had now come from the camp, each one had something to relate of the preceding night, and many complaints were heard, soldier-fashion, of the shabby dealings of the inhabitants towards those who called themselves their deliverers. Jests too went round and much laughter, at the tricks practised on the poor villagers to make them discover their hoards of provision.

"Robert remained silent till some one said, 'Well, lieutenant, you probably were quartered on the mayor or some rich inhabitant, who regaled you and gave you a comfortable bed. You have had nothing to complain of.'

" 'I have nothing to complain of, indeed,' answered Robert. 'Two of my friends, who really needed refreshment more than I did, asked me to change quarters with them, and I did so, and was thus lodged in the cottage of a poor and pious widow, who, on my asking civilly, shared with me all the little provisions she had. She told me afterwards that she had awaited our arrival in fear and trembling, and in prayer to God to protect her from ill usage by rough-mannered foreign soldiers. We were soon friendly together, and I distributed amongst her little children some chocolate which a rich lady, at whose house I had been quartered a few nights before, had put into my knapsack. We ate a frugal meal together and conversed as well as my broken French permitted, and I then lay down on my straw couch and slept as if on eider down till morning. I bade her a solemn farewell this morning, for we are not likely to meet again except in the kingdom of God.'

" 'Yes,' said a soldier, 'but I saw you, lieutenant, softening the pain of parting to the woman, by paying her, and I dare say richly, for her straw couch and water soup.'

" 'Not richly, certainly,' said Robert; 'a soldier's purse is seldom a full one.' Complaints and jests on bad lodgings soon ceased, and conversation took another turn.

"Robert and I became very intimate: we were quite like brothers. Though I had read the Bible before, and had received religious instruction at school, and even attended theological lectures at college, to Robert I owe my knowledge of what true faith consists in. I have never met any man who seemed so entirely governed and led by religious principle. Of course he had inward struggles, but, outwardly, he appeared to go right as it were by instinct, so completely natural did the impulse seem. The proper words to say at

apostolic example, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," and yet she often ventured to act and speak as if she imagined some peculiarity in her state, excusing the murmurings and repinings in which she might have detected the absence of certain appropriate characteristics of the faith.

Mr. D— read one morning before his household a sweet exhortation to gentleness and moderation, and spoke of the "soft answer that turneth away wrath," and the gracious temper that is "not easily provoked;" but in the course of the day, having neglected to adorn himself therewith, he was roused to passionate anger by the carelessness of a servant, and afforded opportunity to the unbeliever to walk away muttering, "If master calls himself a saint, I don't value his religion much, for he read this morning, 'If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue,—this man's religion is vain.'"

It is highly probable that these sins were confessed and mourned over before God, but the world knew nothing of the regret, the penitence, the prayer. A—'s pride and conceit were set up against profession of religion. B—'s quarrel with a brother was charming food for scoffers, who delighted to cry—"There, there, so would we have it!" C—'s acquaintance pronounced emphatically, that they had supposed religion imparted a contented spirit, but she was always careful and troubled about many things; and D— had cast a stumbling block in another's way. Alas, at such times none would have supposed these individuals, so niggardly in their manifestation of Christian graces, were possessors of eternal riches, jewels, from the heavenly mine, treasures which the enemy most envies, and rejoices to see hidden away. The exhortation to wear them, to show them, is plain, "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering."

But perhaps such cases as we have mentioned were besetting sins, hard to be overcome. Then let us more earnestly determine to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. The world has very little respect for professions of faith, but it is compelled to respect (however it may dislike) real consistency of practice, and a hundred books on the evidences of Christianity are less influential than the consistent life of one of Christ's believing people.

B. T.

"HE BROUGHT HIM TO JESUS."

THERE is nothing which should be the occasion of greater joy than the assurance that we have "obtained mercy;" for the man who has found Christ has found a friend who will never forsake him, and a Redeemer who bestows upon him everlasting life.

But the Christian was not converted for his own sake only, but for the sake of those also who are still without Christ. It is the will of that Saviour who delivered him from death, that he should do what he can to save the souls of others; and his experience of the grace of Christ and of the value of his salvation should be additional and very powerful incentives to the performance of that duty.

The day after the baptism of our Lord, John was standing with two of his disciples when Jesus passed. The Baptist immediately exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The two disciples followed Jesus, were received by him with all kindness, and abode with him the remainder of the day. One of them, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, unwilling to enjoy the advantage of the Saviour's instructions and counsels alone, went to Simon, with whom it is highly probable he had often conversed respecting the Hope of Israel, and said to him, evidently with feelings of the utmost elation and gladness; "We have found the Messiah." "And," continues the evangelist, "he brought him to Jesus." It was a beautiful expression of fraternal kindness. And it is an example to all believers.

We cannot do a greater service to our fellow-men than to bring them to Jesus. If there were one in whose welfare you were most deeply interested, and you had a friend who could secure for him everything you were most anxious he should have, it would be your first solicitude to introduce him to that friend. If there were expressed by him whom you sought to serve any reluctance to accompany you, you would try, by the suggestion of every motive of which you could think to overcome that reluctance, and to induce him to seek the exercise of those kindly offices which you know to be of such inestimable value. But there are no blessings to be compared with those which are conferred by Christ on all who seek him. He has pardon for the guilty, holiness for the polluted, joy for the wretched, and everlasting life in heaven for those who are exposed to the curse of God in hell. And he is the only being in the universe through whom these

blessings can be obtained. "Other foundation," says the apostle Paul, "can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He who passes through life destitute of interest in the salvation of Christ, has no prospect before him but that of everlasting misery and death. Do what we may for men besides, there is no service we can do them which can bear the most distant comparison with that of bringing them to Jesus.

Every Christian can attempt this. He cannot do it always effectually, but he can do it instrumentally. He can do that by which the sinner is often converted. He can take that truth in which Christ is revealed, and call attention to it, explain it, and urge it on the sinner's acceptance, at the same time lifting up his prayer for the exercise of that power by which alone it can be made the means of conversion. There cannot be a worthier exercise of the noble faculty of speech than this. He who from natural diffidence or other circumstances cannot personally address those whom he would lead to Christ, may find innumerable modes of usefulness by which he may reach them. He who has worldly substance can consecrate a portion of it to the maintenance of those agencies by which men may be led to Christ: and there is no man who cannot exert some influence which, all things considered, can be exerted by no one else, and by which he may bring some soul to Christ.

It cannot be too deeply impressed on our minds that whatever the talents we possess, and whatever the relations we sustain, God has endowed us with those talents, and placed us in those relations, if not exclusively, yet pre-eminently, that we may lead others to Christ. You are a parent: those children were committed to your care, it is perfectly true, that you might provide for them; that you might educate them; that you might make them good and useful members of society; but most of all, that you might bring them to Jesus. In order that this may be done, there is to be brought to bear upon their opening minds all the authority of a father's counsel, and all the tenderness of a mother's love. You are, perhaps, the only converted member of a numerous household. That household is the first sphere in which you should seek to exert your influence. He whom Andrew first found was his own brother Simon, "and he brought him to Jesus." You have friends, with whom, though not connected by the tie of nature, you have interchanged many acts of kindness. What a becoming use of the power which friendship gives to exert it

thus! And beyond all these comparatively limited circles there are wider ones which embrace the town or city in which we live—our country—the world. Wherever we are, at home or abroad, in occupation or at leisure, in youth or in age, it should be our aim, in every possible way, to bring men to Jesus.

Various motives should incite us to do this. It is required as the expression of our *gratitude to Christ*. How deep are the obligations under which, if we are Christians indeed, we are laid to him! He died for us; he intercedes for us; those agencies by which we were brought to the enjoyment of salvation were put into operation by him, and rendered efficacious by his own Spirit; we have been pardoned through his blood; and he is the foundation of all our hopes. It is a natural question, and one which should be often pondered—What can we do to express our thankfulness to Christ? Next to our own personal consecration there is nothing more acceptable to him than our endeavours to lead the sinner to his feet; for he sees in the conversion of every such sinner, of the travail of his soul, the recompense of those mysterious agonies by which he accomplished the salvation of mankind. And that is to him in every case the occasion of ineffable satisfaction and joy.

This is the *highest philanthropy*. It is a gratifying thing to observe the efforts which are put forth to alleviate the hardships and sorrows of men's present lot; the care which is displayed to obviate the causes of degradation and suffering; and the endeavours which are made to diffuse extensively the blessings of civilization and knowledge. But all this terminates with the life that now is: it makes no provision for that which is to come. It smooths the ruggedness of the way, but it furnishes no preparation for the journey's end. It does nothing for man as immortal—nothing for him as fallen and lost. But if we bring men to Jesus, we bring them to one who can bless them, not only now, but for ever; for he can give them that which is distinctively and emphatically LIFE—a life of holiness, enjoyment, and honour, which will be extended throughout eternity amidst those scenes of brightness and beauty which are spread around the throne of God in heaven. There is no philanthropy like this. "Brethren," says the apostle James, "if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know"—as though that knowledge were of itself a sufficient reward—"that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

And we should think, too, of the influence which may be exerted by those whom we bring to Jesus. It were a great thing if the soul whom we were the means of saving were, like the penitent thief, removed on the day of his conversion to heaven. But it may be otherwise. We may not only convert a soul, we may call into existence a power which will be felt far and wide, and whose beneficial influence will be lasting as eternity. Who was it that Andrew led to Jesus? His own brother: but that brother was Simon Peter, than whom our Lord had never a more devoted and zealous follower—who had conferred on him the honour of opening the gate of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentile world—whose writings remain to this day a part of that precious word by which we are instructed in the knowledge of salvation—and who at last, if ecclesiastical tradition be true, laid down his life in his master's cause. A Christian woman, on her way to the Tabernacle, accosted John Williams, and asked him to go thither. She very likely thought this might be the means of saving his soul; but she could have no idea that she was bringing to Jesus one who should be at once the apostle of civilization and mercy to the savage islanders of the Pacific, and whose name should be identified with some of the most distinguished triumphs which the gospel has achieved in these modern times. We know not what good the man may do whom we bring to Jesus; but we may be almost certain that he will be in a greater or less degree the means of blessing to the world.

Look around you, then, and ask—What is there I can do to bring souls to Christ? And then, as you see your work, resolve that you will do it with all your might. S. G.

POOR MARY.

I MET her in the spring, when the primroses sprinkled the banks, and the call of the cuckoo made the green fields doubly cheerful. She had her bag of books with her, and she was on her way to the school. Her cheek was ruddy then, and her eye bright. As she tripped away with a nimble foot and a light heart I gave her my blessing: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. xxii. 6.

I met her in the summer, when the rose was in full bloom,

and the sun blazed at mid-day over her father's farm. She was leading by the hand her little brother, and she did it so tenderly, and talked to him so kindly, that I could have clasped them both to my heart. Mary's cheek was not so ruddy then as it had been. "She is weary," said I; "the little maiden has been tiring herself with her walk." I thought but little then of her pale cheek, but I thought a great deal of it afterwards. Truly, "we all do fade as a leaf" (Isa. lxiv. 6), and know not what a day may bring forth.

I met her in the autumn, when the fruit hung ripe on the tree, and the yellow corn was ready for the sickle. She was gently removing a black snail from the path, lest it should be trodden on. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy," Matt. v. 7. It did me good to see her tenderness to the crawling creature, but it made my heart ache when I saw her hollow eye, and marked how thin she grew. Still she talked cheerfully, and made no complaint. What is our life? "It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," Jas. iv. 14.

I met her in the winter, when the ponds were frozen, and the red-berried holly-bush was half hid by the snow. I thought that she was hardly fit to be abroad when I saw her wasted frame, but she was going, and it was the last time she did go, to her aged grandmother's with a little basket of Christmas comforts. "Ah!" sighed I to myself, "poor Mary! her days are nearly numbered. Spring and summer and autumn and winter will come again, and the primrose will deck the ground, the rose bloom on the bush, the ripe fruit hang on the bough, and the red-berried holly smile in the wintry hour, but I am not likely to see Mary again, either with her bag of books, or leading by the hand her little brother, or removing an insect from the path, or ministering to her grandmother's comfort."

Scarcely was the hazel hung with catkins in the following spring, before she was called away. She had little pain in her illness, and no fear, for she had long been one of the flock of the Good Shepherd, who leads his sheep along gently, and carries the young lambs in his bosom. Her life was a very lovely one, and her latter end was full of peace and joy in trusting to her Saviour.

I never go by the churchyard without pausing a minute or two at Mary's grave, where the fresh grass is now springing, for I love to think of her gentle ways, her great kindness, her piety, and her peaceful end. On her head-stone, which stands

a little way from the old tomb with the iron bars round it, are the following lines :—

Another lamb, now safe from heat and cold,
Is gently gathered to the heavenly fold.

M. G.

THORNS AND THISTLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

HEROISM.

“You promised, some time ago, to give me your opinion about heroism, papa,” said Alfred to his father. “You seemed to think that it differed from mine as to what a hero is; I should like to hear it.”

“You could not express the wish more opportunely, my son,” Mr. Hatton replied. “My idea of true heroism is well illustrated by a circumstance which occurred lately in Ireland, of which I have just been reading an account.”

“Occurred lately! and in Ireland, papa! What can it be? I did not think there were heroes now, and so near us.”

“You shall hear,” said Mr. Hatton, and he read aloud as follows:—“On the 11th of last January a vessel named the ‘Lady of the Lake’ was wrecked at Bantry. The lives of the captain and three sailors were saved, of which Patrick O’Sullivan, Esq., of Millcove, in that neighbourhood, has given this interesting account: I heard that a vessel was on the Rhone Corrig, and proceeded there, in a whale-boat well manned. When I approached the rock, I saw four men standing upon the highest point of it; the sea around running mountains high. An officer of the Coast-Guard arrived soon after with a revenue cutter and a whale-boat; but none would venture to approach the rock. I thought that if any man on the coast would venture to attempt it, Florence Sullivan would, and I pulled towards the shore for the purpose of procuring his assistance. As I approached the shore I met him rowing out towards the wreck. His crew consisted of his three sons and his brother, five able fellows. We then all proceeded towards the rock, and having got as close to it as, with any safety, was possible, we consulted with the revenue officer as to the best means of trying to save the lives of the men. An effort was made to pass a rope to the rock, but it failed, and it was proposed that a rope should be well secured round a man’s body, with which he should endeavour to swim to the rock, and that, in case of failure, he might be pulled on board; but, on consideration, this was deemed an impossibility. Whilst thus

deliberating, I said to Florence Sullivan, 'Is it not a pity to see the lives of four men sacrificed without some great effort to save them. Will you make the attempt, and I will go with you?' He replied, 'No, master; your life is of value; the boys and I will save them if it is to be done.' I attempted to get into his boat, but with his hand he prevented me; and he, his three sons, and brother, proceeded towards the rock, over which the sea was running mountains high. As they neared the rock, we cheered them. In a moment this whole family might have been launched into eternity, but on they went till within a few yards of the rock, when they all plunged into the raging waters, and having obtained footing, saved their boat from being dashed to pieces, and she was thrown upon the only portion of the rock that presented a pebbly beach. When we saw that they and their boat were safe, we thanked God, and cheered them again and again. They soon after launched their boat again, braving the terrific surge, with the captain and his three men, whom they finally placed in safety on board the revenue cutter. Had not these shipwrecked sailors then, at this great risk, been taken off the rock, they must in a few hours have been swept away by the waves."*

"It was generous, noble conduct, indeed!" said Alfred, who had listened with much interest to the narration. "I hope Florence Sullivan has been suitably rewarded."

"I fear not. The amount of property saved from the wreck did not, the paper states, enable the magistrates to award more than 6*l.* to this noble family. You may well call their conduct generous, for they never made any claim by way of salvage.* It was done on their behalf, and without their knowledge, by a gentleman who heard of the occurrence. But tell me, Alfred, would you not bestow the epithet heroic on this action? Would you not call Sullivan a hero?"

"Well, papa, I admire him greatly: still he is not what I thought was a hero."

"Perhaps not, my son. You may have been accustomed to consider as a hero, not the man whose superior powers are exerted for the good, but for the destruction of his fellow-creatures. Alexander—Napoleon, the man who, as I once heard described, has his greatness measured by the number of countries he subdued; who will coolly calculate how many thousands of men, each with a heart and soul as well as him-

* Cork Constitution, April 7th, 1853.

self, must perish, that he may win an end of his own; who, to place a laurel in his own wreath, will plant a whole country with cypress."

"And what would you call such a man, papa?"

"A prodigy, perhaps; but I could not bestow the name of hero on one who was not magnanimous. I think the index of true heroism is the sacrifice of self for the good of others. It includes greatness of soul, but self-sacrifice is, I would say, its essential element. Now tell me, my son, which displays most of this: Napoleon, and men like him, or the Irish boatman?"

"The poor boatman, certainly, papa; still you will acknowledge that the others must possess greatness of mind?"

"Undoubtedly. But, to refer to our former conversations on the subject of natural qualities perverted by sin, there is, in the conformation of such men, a germ denied to the multitude, which, if well cultivated, would bring forth glorious blossoms and fruit to the honour of the Creator, and the good of mankind; but that otherwise produce only their abortive representations, only thorns and thistles, Alfred, though of such superior growth as, notwithstanding their intrinsic worthlessness, to wear an imposing appearance, exciting the wonder and admiration of the world. Concerning men who have thus misused the rare and splendid talent committed to their keeping, I would say, in words of another,* 'that though among all the forms of heroism there is no prodigy more wonderful than the tremendous conqueror, yet I turn from him with honest disgust, as miserably perverting and denaturalizing the idea of heroism; sacrificing others to himself, instead of sacrificing himself to others.' Never, my son, be so dazzled by the splendour of any achievement as to call it heroic when it wants magnanimity."

"I see, papa, that according to your test, Sullivan and his family were real heroes."

"I would now have you observe, Alfred, if instances of heroism such as this be so beautiful, when extreme peril is incurred, and almost superhuman exertions made to save the lives of others, that life which is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away (James iv. 14); how truly sublime are the efforts of those who brave danger and death to be the means of saving immortal souls!"

"Indeed they are, papa: but you would not assert that

* Lecture on Heroes, at Exeter Hall, by the Rev. Wm. Arthur.

every Christian missionary who exposes himself to danger and death in his attempts to convert the heathen, is a hero?"

"Certainly not. You may remember I said that not only the magnanimity which leads to self-sacrifice was necessary to constitute that character, but also natural greatness of soul, with which only a few are endued."

"And is not this quality ever conferred by grace when people are converted, papa?"

"I think not; for as Isaac Taylor observes, 'the germs of a noble temper and of moral sensitiveness have never been wanting in the conformation of men whose after-life has entitled them, in any true sense of the word, to be styled great; for although the grace of heaven may often make the wicked good, yet its province is not to make the little great; those who are to be such are born—not made.' But, my son, what I conceive to be the other requisite of true heroism—magnanimous self-devotion for the benefit of others—may, in its highest and holiest sense, be attained by the weakest mind that receives the gospel of Christ, and diligently seeks the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the appointed way."

"This thought is an encouraging one, papa?"

"It is; and when you feel aspirations after heroism arising in your bosom, recollect that though you may not be by nature calculated for devising and executing mighty deeds at which the world would wonder, you may, by grace, be fitted for acts of self-denial and disinterested love over which the angels of heaven will rejoice (Luke xv. 7), and which will be pleasing in the sight of Him who loved you so well as to give himself for you, Gal. ii. 20."

"How pleasant it would be to see the rare gifts which you say produce a prodigy, papa, exerted in the cause of religion!"

"Yes, my son. We may form some idea of what, for instance, the mighty mind of Napoleon might have effected, under the influence of Divine grace, and with the Divine blessing, for promoting the eternal welfare of his fellow-beings. Watered by the dews of heaven, that seed of greatness in his soul which brought devastation upon such multitudes, would truly have 'flourished as the palm-tree, and grown like the cedar in Lebanon.' However, thanks be to God, the history of his church is not without examples of men who made a legitimate use of what you term his rare gifts, and dedicated them wholly to his service. Let us ever remember, my dear boy, that the powers of our mind, whether great or little, and the affections of our hearts, will, unless we are

'God's husbandry' (1 Cor. iii. 9), and till he enables us to break up our fallow ground, and comes and rains righteousness upon us (Hos. x. 12), bring forth nothing that is really good in his sight, however worthy of admiration it may seem to our fellow-men; but that the denunciation of the prophet is still upon us—'The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars,' Hos. x. 8.

E. F. G.

A DISTRICT VISITOR'S NOTE BOOK.

I WAS very new to my work when I entered upon it, and had but an indefinite idea of the duties which, as a District Visitor, I should be called upon to fulfil. I had been told that my first care must be, if possible, to do good to the souls of the poor with whom I was about to become acquainted, and then I was to try to help them in temporal things by various means which had been pointed out to me. I was to put them in the way of obtaining Bibles where they were needed; to promote the sending of their children to Sunday and other schools; to read to the sick: to sympathize and advise with them under circumstances of sorrow or difficulty which they might in time confide to me; and, in cases of necessity, I was empowered to administer pecuniary aid according to my judgment and discretion. This did not seem very arduous; yet when I set out one morning, accompanied by a friend, to make my first calls, I felt that I had undertaken a task of great responsibility, for which I needed both wisdom "from above," and that Divine assistance which God has promised to the humblest effort made in his cause, and for his sake. But I went forth hopefully, and with good courage, for I believed that I was going in obedience to the call of duty; and it is wonderful what strength this conviction gives, when we are also enabled to realize the assurance that our Master and Saviour is with us, approving and blessing even the kind word, or the "cup of cold water," which is offered for the love of him.

I felt this assurance the more strongly on this occasion, because it had been to me for some time past a subject of earnest prayer that I might be permitted to join with the people of Christ in some "labour of love,"—that my "one talent," if I possessed one, might find employment which should be, in its humble degree, for the service of God and the benefit of others. So that when, without my seeking, I was appointed a District Visitor in my own immediate neighbourhood, I saw in the circumstance an answer to my prayers, and prepared for my

new duties with the sure belief that when our heavenly Father calls us to any work, he gives grace for its performance, if we ask for his help in our Saviour's name. My young friend and companion shared with me in this encouraging certainty. She had not long since recovered from a dangerous illness, which had brought her near to the gates of death; and having herself received the most merciful support and consolation in her sickness from "the God of all comfort," her warm feelings of gratitude and love had awakened an earnest desire to seek out the poor and afflicted, that she might comfort those who were in any trouble by the comfort wherewith she herself had been comforted of God, 2 Cor. i. 4. Therefore we each set out on this, to us, important morning, conscious of our own weakness and inability, yet cheering ourselves and encouraging each other with the assurance that the promised grace was "sufficient" for us, and for every duty which lay before us.

Perhaps a brief record of some of these visits may not be uninteresting to young readers who have hitherto had but little opportunity of becoming acquainted with the poor, while to me it has been occasionally a pleasant occupation to write down the little incidents which I have met with, the domestic histories which I have learned, and especially the proofs of God's providence and mercy which it has often been my happiness to see. I cannot say that my Note Book has been the chronicle of many striking events: but the very simplicity of everyday characters and occurrences may bring them home to the experience of others, and impart to them a value which the marvellous or the improbable could not possess. My aim has been to give a faithful transcript of what I have seen and heard; and my highest hope is now to strengthen in some disciple of Christ the wish and purpose of serving him, by showing that objects of interest, and opportunities of usefulness, may be found at our very door. It does not need great talents or abilities; it does not need riches or an influential position in society;—

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask."

Only let us use all the means in our power for doing good, and then, even if we are not permitted to see any great result, we shall have peace of conscience, and the blessing which rested upon that loving servant of old, when she had "done what she could."

live, nor anything to remain to us but to take our place in the long home by the side of the unforgotten dead. No, assuredly ; whatever this world may be, it is not our rest.

How influential should such a consideration be with us ! How subdued should all our earthly affections and activities be ! Oh ! this world is not a sphere in which the whole intensity of our love can safely be poured forth. Wherefore, unless to pierce ourselves with more and sharper sorrows, should we grasp with unrestricted ardour objects which may be wrested so early from our embrace, or from which we ourselves may be so speedily torn ?

But if this world be not our rest, what then is it ? The language suggests that it is a place of transit rather than of repose, a passage to a scene which lies further before us. It supposes—and the fact is so—that there is a world to come as well as a world that now is, and a future life to which the present is appointed to conduct us. There are, consequently, three lights in which this world may be practically regarded.

First, it is a sphere of preparation. The world to which we are going needs preparation. It is full of great and solemn objects, constituting a glorious heaven and an awful hell, and there is no safety in an entrance into it inconsiderate and unprepared. To dwell for ever with God in glory, or to suffer his everlasting frown, is an awful alternative, and our great business here is to secure for ourselves a favourable decision of it. Important as it may be to ask, What shall I eat, and what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed, it is unspeakably more important to ask, What shall I do to be saved ? It is to prepare for eternity that time is given, and before all things should we embrace the inestimable mercy of God set before us in the gospel, and flee for refuge from the wrath to come ; for “ What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? ”

Secondly, This world is a sphere of trial. If through the Lord Jesus it has been given us by the Holy Spirit to believe in his name, it remains that our graces be subjected to a course of trial, by which their sincerity may be proved, and God may be glorified. To such a purpose a state of things altogether happy would have had no adaptation. It needed a world of blended light and darkness, of mingled joy and grief, to supply the occasions by which our faith and patience should be put to the test. Amidst the changeful and mysterious events of life as it now is, God may be regarded as saying to his children—“ Show how sincerely you love me,

and how perfectly you can trust me. Let it be seen how much you can give up at my bidding, how firmly you can trust my promise, and how submissive you can be under my rod." And it is thus we should endeavour to glorify him. We may well deem it an honour to be placed in such a position as to glorify God in suffering, a prerogative which we share only with the blessed Son of God. Nor shall our faith and patience be without their recompense; for "the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, shall be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," 1 Peter i. 7.

Thirdly, This world is a sphere of service. God has much for us to do in it while we stay. He is waging a great controversy with the powers of darkness, and carrying out a glorious scheme of mercy for a guilty world. In this matter he wants our help, that is, he thinks fit to employ it in preference to any other kind of ministration. We are on the spot. We are qualified by his grace and Spirit to exercise a most beneficial influence. We are dispersed through the world in the various positions in which the influences emanating from us may be most usefully exercised. We thus form a part of the Lord's host, which consists of the "called, and chosen, and faithful," and have, under the Captain of our salvation, to fight the battle of his truth and love. For this cause are we to tarry awhile in this region of strife and trial. Here is required the influence of our example, the exercise of our liberality, the fruit of our lips. Shall these be required in vain? Ah! no. Redeeming mercy has laid us under obligations too vast for such a return of love to be refused.

Thus viewed, the world with all its mystery can, in part at least, be understood. As a sphere of preparation, of trial, and of service, it is appropriate that it should be what it is, and if our repose be not complete, at least our duty is plain. But is it to be always so? And is there to be no repose?

Yes! "There remaineth a rest," Heb. vi. 9. The very declaration that this is not our rest implies that in another region rest will be found.

"There remaineth a rest." But for whom? For all? No, not for all. For some, alas! there remains a house of sorrow, where they rest not day nor night from their piercing woe. For whom, then, is there rest? For all who will accept a title to it, and cultivate a meetness for it. A title to it is to be obtained freely by grace, through faith in our

Lord Jesus Christ; and a meetness for it will result from the renewing and purifying power of faith on the heart. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," Heb. iv. 1.

And where is this rest? exclaims, perhaps, life's weary pilgrim. And when shall I reach it? And what are its elements of bliss?

The rest that remaineth is in heaven, beyond the confines of mortality, and in the immediate presence of God: there where Jesus dwells in glory, the Head of "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven." And the time when you shall go there, weary pilgrim, is God's own time—not that dictated by your impatience, but that selected by his wisdom. When you have done and borne all his will, and made all your destined contribution to his glory; not too soon, so as to cut short your work on earth, nor too late, so as to lose any of the joys of heaven. But as to the elements of its blessedness we hold our peace; for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9; but they that reach it shall be "for ever with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv. 17.

What a reconciling thought is this! It is better, then, that this world is not our rest, but that our willing feet may go where it will be infinitely more happy to remain. Nor need we care now about this world's mysteries. Since we tarry not in it, but only make a hasty passage through it to a world all light and joy, let clouds and darkness, if so it please God, rest upon it. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17.

J. H. H.

THE FLOOD IN CORK.

THE morning of November 2nd, 1853, was in the city of Cork one of peculiar mildness and brightness for the season, the more cheering as it had been preceded by two gloomy days and nights of ceaseless rain. The spirits of almost every person must feel the exhilarating influence of such a change; and on this day, numbers of persons, either for business or pleasure, were abroad in the streets from an early hour.

Though a strong current was rushing through the different branches of the river Lee, which was swelled and turbid from the heavy fall of water, and though a good deal of injury was

reported to have been done by the flood in the neighbouring country, yet the lovely sunshine seemed to dispel all thoughts of danger or distress; and even when water rose in parts of the streets, it was attributed to a mere ordinary rise of the river after rain and a high tide. But He "who bindeth the floods from overflowing" (Job xxviii. 11), who curbs by the word of his power all the wildest elements of nature, at times displays the same omnipotence, for mysterious purposes, in an opposite manner; and annulling the mandate, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," gives apparently uncontrolled liberty to those creatures of his might, thrilling weak, helpless man with terror at their overwhelming fury.

Such an awful event occurred on this day, when about the hour of 1 A.M. a cry of horror and distress was heard—a large portion of the principal bridge of Cork had fallen a sudden and total ruin, torn down by the force of the torrent. In an instant the bridge, before crowded with human beings and their busy traffic to and fro, became a scene of desolation, and a dismayed multitude at each end were discussing the probable number of victims who, in a moment's time, had been buried out of sight in the waters. The same sudden rush from the distant mountains which caused this destruction poured on in a rising flood through many of the streets, compelling all who were out of doors to take refuge in the nearest houses, while the general dread still increased; and men's minds were afraid to conjecture where it might end. Apprehensions began to be felt lest some of the arched quays on which several of the streets are built should burst upwards from the force of the flood beneath them, causing a devastation from which the mind revolted in horror; but this mercifully was averted.

Through the Providence which still rules every motion of the universe, even when it seems obscured in clouds of wrath, the number of those hurried into eternity did not amount, it is believed, to twelve persons. It is well known that the side of the beautiful and secure-looking structure which gave way was just before more than usually crowded with persons looking at the rapid tide, when what the unreflecting would call "chance" caused that a ship moving round in the river, or, as some say, pieces of broken timber borne on by the flood, drew attention to the opposite side of the bridge, and numbers left the spot which in a few moments became a crushing ruin.

Many an anxious hour was spent by the relatives of those who were unable to return to their homes till the flood abated, and many had almost miraculous escapes from being on the

fatal bridge at the time of its fall—escapes which the subjects of them must remember, we trust with profit, till their dying day. And still, like the loveliness of nature smiling on the afflicted, the bright sunshine looked down in strange contrast on the terror-stricken countenances of men, and on the work of destruction which had occurred.

The above events are very generally known; but it may be feared that many, even of the eye-witnesses, have not reflected on the solemn lessons which it was no doubt intended to convey. Our Lord said of another destructive accident—"Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?" Luke xiii. 4. Let us also not think that those hurried before the bar of God in a moment were sinners singled out for punishment to the exclusion of the favoured number whose lives were preserved, but rather adopt our Lord's language, "Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" not, perhaps, by the fall of a bridge or tower, not by a sudden flood, but by a more fearful destruction, by a more abiding desolation, by the flood of God's wrath, when the wicked shall call on the mountains and rocks to fall, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. What a powerful image of that wrath is presented by a wide-rushing sweep of waters, overturning the strongest works of man, and as little hindered in its course by human exertion as by an insect's web!

The same holy justice which destroyed with a flood the world of the ungodly, shall, "by the same word," pour a deluge of just and eternal indignation, "as a flood of mighty waters overflowing" (Isa. xxviii. 2), "on those that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Thess. i. 8. Oh, then, while it is yet time, cling to the Rock of Ages, and when the destruction of the wicked is at hand, "Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh thee;" and, justified by faith in Christ, you shall be borne triumphant and glorious in him, the Ark, to the haven of everlasting security, peace, and joy. X. Y. Z.

TRACT ANECDOTE.

THE HINDOO TRACT AND THE TRUE GOOROO.

Sommerfield (Prussia), 12th January, 1854.

I BEG to annex a few particulars relating to the use of tracts distributed among the heathen in our Tirhoot mission, which will, I trust, prove acceptable to your friends at large.

In our Tirhoot mission there is a branch church, consisting of upwards of thirty souls, including children, who date their conversion partly from a tract which was given them by one of our missionaries in the year 1844, when he was on a missionary tour along the bank of a little river in the neighbourhood of their villages, about thirty-six miles distant from us. The first members and fathers of this little church were about that time in a great measure prepared for the reception of the truth under the direction of an old heathen gooroo (religious guide) : they had already forsaken the worship of idols, and imbibed lax notions as to caste ; but what to worship instead of idols the gooroo could not tell them, nor could he give them strength enough to break caste. He told them, however, that " the true Gooroo was still to come, and that at his appearance his Scriptures would run from house to house ; and that his appearance might be looked for in their lifetime." This old gooroo, of the name of Bahoridas, died and left his disciples, our poor village weavers, in a state of expectation of the appearance of the true Gooroo. Just about this time two of our missionaries of Tirhoot happened to call at their villages, where they preached and distributed tracts to all who liked them, " without any distinction of caste."

All these circumstances attracted the attention of our weavers, and reminded them most vividly of the prophecy of their old gooroo ; and when the brethren had left their village, their attention was at once directed to the tracts which the brethren had left in their hands : their desire to understand the tracts, however, was not so easily satisfied. The poor weavers could not read well ; besides, the tracts were not written (as all their own books were), but printed, and in a kind of Hindu characters too, which they were not used to. One man amongst them has given us repeatedly an account of his attempts to manage to read the tract which he had received. He took the tract up a number of times, and tried hard to manage the letters and words, but threw it down again in despair of making it out. Still his desire to understand the little book was too great to admit of despair. He at length felt an unknown impulse to pray ; but how ? And to whom Christians pray he did not know. However, he stooped down, and uttered the following words in his heart : " Thou who hast caused this book to be written, if thou be the true Gooroo, help me to read and understand it." Certainly this was prayer ; and He who hears the cry of the young ravens could not fail to answer the cry of a soul long-

ing after its God and Saviour. The man took up the tract again and again, and at last succeeded in reading it down to the bottom of the first page. He needed not to read more, for he was now convinced that this book contained the truth, and that he must now get up and find out the men who distributed such books. After having communicated his thoughts to his fellow inquirers, and kindled in them a similar desire, three of their number came to Moogufferpore, and had their first interview with the brethren, which led subsequently to repeated visits, and at last to the conversion of four men in two villages, who became the founders of a little church in the midst of a heathen district, and have proved sincere, able, and most useful means of propagating the gospel in their neighbourhood. The name of the one who managed to spell the tract was "Hanumán," now Anthoni; and the tract which proved the first means of directing him to Christ is still in his possession, and he means to keep it for a perpetual memorial.

A. STERNBERG, *Missionary.*

DIVINE MERCY.

From the recesses of a holy spirit
My humble prayer ascends; O Father, hear it
Upsoaring on the wings of fear and meekness,
Forgive its weakness.

I know, I feel, how mean and how unworthy
The trembling sacrifice I pour before thee;
What can I offer in thy presence holy
But sin and folly!

For in thy sight, who every bosom viewest,
Cold are our warmest vows, and vain our truest;
Thoughts of a hurrying hour, our lips repeat them,
Our hearts forget them.

We see thy hand, it leads and it supports us;
We hear thy voice, it counsels and it courts us;
And then we turn away, and still thy kindness
Pardons our blindness.

And still thy rain descends, thy sun is glowing,
Fruits ripen round; flowers are beneath us blowing,
And, as if man were some deserving creature,
Joys cover nature.

Oh! how long-suffering, Lord! But thou delightest
To win with love the wandering. Thou invitest
By smiles of mercy, not by pains or terrors,
Man from his errors.

Who can resist thy gentle call, appealing
To every hallowed thought and grateful feeling,
And voice paternal whispering, watching ever?
My bosom? Never.

Father and Saviour, plant within this bosom
The seeds of holiness, and bid them blossom
In fragrance and in beauty bright and vernal,
And spring eternal.

Then place them in those everlasting gardens
Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens;
Where every flower that creeps through death's dark porta
Becomes immortal.

DEFENCE IN WAR.

Exodus xvii. 8—16.

WHEN Joshua led the armed bands
Of Israel forth to war:
Moses apart, with lifted hands,
Engaged in earnest prayer.

The armed bands had quickly failed
And perished in the fight,
If Moses' prayer had not prevailed
To put the foes to flight.

When Moses' hands thro' weakness dropped,
The warriors fainted too;
Israel's success at once was stopped,
And Amalek bolder grew.

A people always prone to boast,
Were taught by this suspense,
That not a numerous armed host,
But God was their defence.

We now of fleets and armies vaunt,
And ships and men prepare;
But men like Moses most we want
To save the state by prayer.

Yet, Lord, we hope Thou hast prepared
A hidden few this day,
The nation's secret strength and guard,
To weep, and mourn, and pray.

Oh, hear their prayers, and grant us aid,
Bid war and discord cease;
Heal the sad breach which sin has made,
And bless us all with peace.

From the Olney Hymns.



LUKE SHORT.

ABOUT the middle of the last century died at Middleburgh, in New England, an old farmer called Luke Short. He was so old that 116 was the age marked on his tombstone. This was probably an exaggeration, but as he was not a native of that place, nor was there any one living who remembered his first settling there, no means existed of certifying what his age really was. That he had long passed the usual term of human life was certain, and he latterly lived entirely amongst the young, who naturally regarded him as older than his contemporaries would have done. He had never married, and the companions of his early life were long since dead; but his old age was not solitary, for the young people of the neighbourhood were so attached to the old farmer, and took such pleasure in his society, that he was seldom alone, and then only at his own request. Every evening a circle of these young people gathered about him, in winter round his cheerful fire, and in summer at the windows, which opened like doors, or what we now call French windows, into his pretty flower-garden—or sometimes in the porch, which was large and deep, and covered with fragrant creeping plants. No

matter what excursion or pleasure was planned for the fine summer evenings, some few always remained behind, lest Luke Short should find the evening dull for want of company, or should think himself neglected now that the weakness of old age forbade his leaving his own farm.

Had Luke merely consulted his own liking, he would often have preferred spending his evening alone, or rather, not alone, but in communion with his Saviour, and in meditation and prayer; but he considered that in his youth he had done nothing for the service of God, and that now in his old age, when he had gained such influence over the young and thoughtless, he was the more bound to use that influence in the Redeemer's cause, by trying to lead these young people into the paths of righteousness and peace.

He had travelled much, and his conversation was lively and full of anecdote, which he brought forth profitably in elucidation of the subject on which he was speaking. The most marked feature in his character was his severe judgment of himself, combined with the greatest tenderness and indulgence towards the frailties of others; and perhaps it was this which made him so popular with the young. His chief endeavour was to stir them up to active exertion in the cause of Christ, to urge them to work while they had youth and strength, so that in after life they should not have to regret so many years wasted in the service of the world and of sin. When he heard any of those whom he had succeeded in thus rousing blaming others who were still walking in the ways of ungodliness, he would say, "Let us have patience with them. The Dutch proverb says, 'The thread of patience is long and strong,' but I suppose that means God's patience with us, for our patience with each other is very short and weak. Oh, remember, who makes us to differ. Remember the forbearance and long-suffering of God, whose goodness leads us to repentance."

This was before the days of Sunday schools; but Luke Short had persuaded some of these young friends that a very fit and proper employment for part of the sabbath was trying to impart to others, younger or more ignorant than ourselves, the little we have learned of the things pertaining to salvation. One or two had thus formed a sort of Sunday school, or Bible class, and had, they hoped, won the attention of some who would otherwise have spent the whole Sunday in idle sport.

The winter before his death Luke Short had a severe illness,

which confined him to his bed for several weeks ; he, however, partially recovered, and when well enough to take his seat in his large arm-chair beside the fire, his young friends assembled as usual to congratulate him on his recovery, and to recount to him all the little occurrences which they knew would interest him. Edward M— was one for whom he felt great esteem, and of whom he had formed high expectations, and this evening he thought Edward looked vexed or unhappy, and that he was not so communicative as usual ; Luke, therefore, addressing himself particularly to him, inquired what progress they had made in Sunday-teaching during his illness. Edward replied, “ Last Sunday I did not teach the boys at all, nor do I mean to do it any more. It is of no manner of use, indeed it only makes them worse. During the week they are more given to mischief and idleness than ever. I saw them myself gambling for nuts and apples, and then stealing apples from your orchard to pay what they had lost. Then they fell to quarrelling, and when I remonstrated and reminded them of what they had been taught on Sunday, they laughed at me, and said something very unkind of you, sir, who, they said, had taught me to think so badly of boys’ sport. I give them up now ; I mean to have no more to do with them.”

Old Short felt more than commonly grieved at all this ; and not so much at the ill-conduct of the boys, which he looked upon as merely the natural fruit of the unregenerate heart, as at Edward M—. That his favourite, from whom he expected so much, should show himself so unforgiving, so little indulgent to his erring fellow-creatures, so little persevering in his efforts for the good of others, deeply hurt him. Perhaps the weakness of recent illness rendered him more susceptible than at other times, and the near approach of eternity prevented him from looking on any feeling of the heart as trifling. Whatever it was, it brought his own sin to his remembrance, and for a few moments he covered his face with his hands. All were silent until he spoke again to say, “ My dear young friends, if the Lord were to deal with us as we are inclined to deal with our fellow-creatures, where should we be ? Were it not that ‘ He is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,’ we had long ago been left to the evil and misery our own inclinations would lead us to ; but He is gracious and long-suffering indeed. I may say so, for like the apostle I may declare, that I obtained mercy that in me Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern

to them which believe in him. I cannot be much longer with you here below, and lest this should be our last meeting all together, I will tell you how the Lord had patience with me year after year, and did not reject me at the last, though for so long a time I had refused to hearken to his voice. I had not even the excuse of deafness to offer, for I did hear the word, but I refused to obey.

"I am not, as you know, a native of this province. I was born in Devonshire, in old England. Having left that country so many years ago, my recollection of it is but faint, but I have never forgotten a sermon which I heard at Dartmouth. When I must have been, I think, about fifteen, I went into a church in that town, where a very gifted man of God frequently preached. His subject that day was the love of Christ to perishing sinners, and the state of the man who feels no love for this all-powerful Saviour. As he spoke of the life of those who know not God, and of the hopelessness of their end, contrasted with the peace and happiness promised to those who listen to the gracious invitations of the Lord, I felt that it was indeed the word of God, and not the word of man, that he published from the pulpit. I felt as though it were the Spirit of God striving with me, and had I then humbled myself before the Lord, and prayed for a change of heart, no doubt I should have spared myself the pangs I felt in after years; but I turned a deaf ear to the voice which spoke within me; I stifled my convictions, and a week after I had heard this sermon I was as careless and forgetful of God as before.

"Soon after this I entered the sea-service on board a merchantman. To my worldly affairs I was always attentive, and in the course of time, having obtained a share in the trading concern of the vessel, contrived to lay by money sufficient to purchase a little farm in this country, where at that time land was cheap. All my efforts seemed to prosper, all I undertook was successful, yet I never thought of thanking the Lord, by whose providence alone they were rendered thus successful. Year after year I reaped a plentiful harvest, and my fruit-trees bore abundantly. I built this good house; I made this pretty garden, and many would have pronounced me happy, but I was not so. I had no true sense of enjoyment. The Lord had given me all things richly to enjoy, and would have given me the heart, too, had I asked it, but I continued without hope, 'without God in the world,' until I was sixty years of age.

"I must have been fully that age, when, on a fine day in autumn, I went out into my fields to look at the corn now ripe for harvest. It was Sunday, and the reapers were to commence their work the following day on the wheat, which, now rich and heavy, lay spread before me. As I lay under a spreading tree, I thought of the many years during which that field had so well repaid the care bestowed upon it, and my thoughts ran back through years past, until they reached my youthful days in England and the church at Dartmouth, where the word of God had for a moment touched my heart. That powerful sermon was as fresh in my memory as if I had heard it but the day before. The description of the hopeless end of those who are without Christ, when the angels come as reapers to gather the people of God from amongst those who have refused to listen to his word, came with power to my mind and conscience, and I felt like one of the rejected. My own fields I thought might rise in judgment against me. How many fold had they returned the seed cast into the ground year after year, while the seed thrown into my heart, what fruit had it produced? Oh if I could but live those years over again, how differently I would act! Is it too late? I became bewildered and confused in my thoughts, but at last, scarcely knowing what I did, I threw myself on my knees and prayed for light. I know not what words I used, but after a little while I felt not comforted (for it was long ere I experienced such a feeling), but calmer, and decided henceforth to seek the Lord, if perhaps mercy and forgiveness might be found even at the eleventh hour. I was not rejected. I asked in the name of Christ, and was heard by Him whose patience and long-suffering are infinite. He established my feet on the rock, and old as I thought myself, I have lived many years since to wonder at his goodness and mercy to one like me. When I see with what impatience one man bears the slightest inattention or wrong-doing from another, my sin returns to my memory with such force that I feel a wish which I cannot express to give him some idea of the apostle's meaning in the words, 'O man, that judgest them which do such things:—despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?' It is the recollection of this forbearance that should lead us to have patience with others."

The old man showed such emotion as he spoke that his words made a deep impression on all, and Edward assured him that, with God's help, he would persevere in his efforts to

benefit his neighbours, whether those efforts were successful or not, and bear opposition with patience.

Old Luke Short died in a few months after this conversation, but he was long remembered at Middleburgh, and Edward M— and his other young friends never forgot his advice to be patient with all men, and acting, by God's grace, upon it, became instruments of much good.

E. M. P.

THE CHAMBERS OF IMAGERY ; OR, THE DREAM
INTERPRETED.

“ My waking thoughts are best concealed,
Much folly, little good they yield ;
But now and then I gain when sleeping
A friendly hint that's worth the keeping.”

DR. WATTS, enumerating the characteristics of a sluggard, reckons this as one, “ He told me his dreams ;” and certainly the generality of our sleeping visions are so wild, inconsistent, and even foolish, that it would ordinarily be a waste of our own time, and an unwarrantable trial of our hearers' patience, to attempt relating them.

Sometimes, however, they are of so singular or amusing a character, either from the incidents in the dreams themselves, or from some curious coincidence in real life with which they tally, that the relation of them is, to say the least, allowable. In others, as Mr. Newton observes, some “ friendly hint” is given which may be improved to our own spiritual benefit and that of others ; while occasionally we have well authenticated accounts of solemn warnings being conveyed, and lasting impressions made in a dream, in “ the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.”

“ Some dreams are useless, moved by turbid course
Of animal disorder,—not so all :
Deep moral lessons some impress, that nought
Can afterwards efface.”

Pollok.

A living writer* remarks, “ Our dreams sometimes reveal our character, our sins, our destiny, far more clearly than our waking thoughts ; for conscience is often busy in the night-time, the external business of the day preventing attention to her claims ; and as she walks about in the silent chambers of the soul, imagination follows tremblingly behind ; and now these two alone dwell upon the events of a life which the waking man would never look into.”

* Cheever.

If it be so, then surely it is wise to attend to the friendly warning thus given by these two faculties implanted in the soul by our Almighty Creator. Under this conviction the writer is induced to relate the following dream which made some impression, not altogether unprofitable, on her own mind ; in the hope that the train of thought to which it gave rise may prove of lasting benefit to some, by leading them to watchfulness and self-examination.

I dreamt some time since that I was spending a few days with a friend who resided at a short distance from town. We were at family prayer, being, as usual, assembled in the drawing-room ; but by one of those strange inconsistencies so common in dreams, I soon found, though without any feeling of surprise, the scene changed to the kitchen.

Scarcely had we knelt down, when, hearing a slight rustling by my side, I turned, and saw the cook rise very deliberately, and proceed to make preparations for dinner. Although she did this so quietly as not to disturb any one, there was no appearance of any wish for concealment, all seemed a matter-of-course. In the mean time the house-maid had also risen, and commenced opening various drawers, from which she took sundry articles for the prosecution of her peculiar duties.

As I looked at her in astonishment, her eye met mine, but there was no change of expression in her countenance, nor did she appear conscious of any impropriety in her conduct, but continued her work with perfect indifference.

"Is this, then," I thought, "their constant practice?" but before this enquiry could be solved I awoke ; and as I lay in that dozing state which is neither sleeping nor waking, musing over my dream (for the scene was so graphically portrayed on my imagination, and the incidents were so apparently consistent with each other, that I could easily recal them), this answer was suggested, "Yes, such is the constant practice of many worshippers, not only at the family altar, but also in the house of God,—and ah ! must it not be added, in the closet also?"

But some one may say, "Oh ! you were surely dreaming still : I never saw or heard of any one rising in the midst of private, family, or public worship, and set about their ordinary occupations."

True, my readers, but do you remember the words of Scripture, as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he?" Thoughts are actions in the sight of God. We do not rise from our knees

or alter our posture of devotion ; we have too much deference for our fellow-worshippers to act thus. The man of business does not carry his ledger, nor the young lady her portfolio to the house of God ; but he observes the attitude of the heart towards him, and declares his verdict of approval or of condemnation accordingly. "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart," said Jehovah to David. "I know you," said Christ to the Jews, who were at that very time professing great zeal for the honour of the law, the temple, and the sabbath ; "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."

Thus while the outward development of this inward wandering of the heart may seldom be apparent in an assembly of professedly Christian worshippers, or be only occasionally manifested by the roving eye, or the listless posture, the eye of the Discerner of spirits penetrates deeper than these external appearances ; and since all things are naked and opened to his sight, of how many who "draw nigh unto him with their mouths and honour him with their lips," may he declare "In vain do they worship me !"

" Their lifted eyes salute the skies,
 Their bended knees the ground ;
 But God abhors the sacrifice
 Where not the heart is found."

Were it possible to write down the train of ideas which have passed through the mind of some apparently devout supplicant during the season of private, social, or public worship, what an interlineation of worldly and spiritual meditations would appear ! how many schemes of business and plans of pleasure, how many reminiscences of the past, and plans for the future, would be found intermixed with confessions of sin, pleadings for pardon, and thanksgivings for mercies ; forming together such a medley of inconsistencies that none would venture to expose it even to the scrutiny of a fellow-sinner, much less presume to present it as prayer to the holy, heart-searching God !

A striking illustration of this point may be mentioned. A Christian visitor calling upon a dying woman, who had for many years attended the means of grace, found her quite ignorant of her state as a sinner, and of the way of salvation. Feeling that no time must be lost, he proceeded to warn her of the imminent danger of her unconverted state, at the same time explaining the nature, and urging the necessity of "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." "This is all a mystery to me," exclaimed the poor sufferer. "And yet," replied her visitor, "you must often have heard

these truths from the pulpit!" "Very likely," she answered; "but my thoughts were otherwise engaged—dress and fashion filled my mind." "As she spoke," adds the relater, "I remembered the confession recorded in holy writ: 'I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.'"

But it is not only the careless or formal worshipper who is subject to this under-current of vain imaginations; the sincere believer is not secure against the incursions of rambling, worldly, or even sinful thoughts. These, in great measure, constitute the "iniquity of the holy things," and cause him to cry continually "O wretched man that I am!" These give rise to the inward conflict described by the apostle Paul; for though the mind of the Christian is renewed by grace, yet still in his "flesh dwelleth no good thing." We do not hear the worldling complain of this burden; but the Christian who desires to attend upon the Lord without distraction, mourns over this hindrance to his spiritual communion with God. The one resembles a man who is overtaken and hurried on, before he is aware, by an unruly crowd; the other is as one passing on with them unresistingly, as among his chosen companions or familiar friends. Therefore, let none to whom this restless working of the imagination is a grief and burden too hastily conclude that they have neither part nor lot with the children of God.

This subject suggests, however, matter for serious self-examination, as the reception we give to this crowd of thoughts, ever urging their claims upon our attention, may furnish a distinctive mark either of sincerity or dissimulation. Do we invite them; or, if they come unbidden and force an entrance, are we careful not to welcome and entertain them as guests, but to oppose and eject them as thieves and robbers?

Should it not also be regarded as a point of great importance to endeavour to ascertain the best means by which these vain and wandering thoughts may at least be kept under and brought into subjection?

First, then, if the seat of this "evil disease that cleaveth to us" be in the heart, there the remedy must be applied. The axe must be laid to the root of the tree. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Until this corrupt fountain be purified it will continue to send forth polluted and polluting waters; hence the prayer of David should be ours. "Create in me a clean heart, O God!"

2dly. Regard vain thoughts not only as an infirmity to be deplored, but as an iniquity to be confessed. "I hate vain thoughts," says the psalmist; not merely do I lament them as a weakness which oppresses; I abhor them as a sin which defiles. Such a revolting of heart from their influence is a satisfactory proof that they are not so much the suggestions of the heart as the injections of the enemy. "If I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Their entrance, or even their in-dwelling, may be considered as our temptation. It is the indulgence of them which constitutes our sin.*

3dly. Let them be met by immediate resistance. If you admit, or even parley with one, another and another will follow, till at length a whole will rush in like a spring-tide or an inundation, and carry all before them. Resist at once, and, like him from whom they proceed, they will flee from you.

4thly. Realize the presence of God at the throne of grace. It is true "the eyes of the Lord are in every place;" they "run to and fro throughout the whole earth;" but they rest—they look upon the humble suppliant at the footstool of mercy. He represents himself as specially present there; waiting to be gracious, inclining his ear to listen, opening his hand to bless; and will not such a thought tend more than any other to fix our wandering hearts, so that they shall not dare to indulge in vanity or trifling in the immediate presence of God?

5thly. Beware of yielding to the temptation to desist even for a season from services so polluted that they seem rather as a mockery of God than an acceptable service. If this suggestion be received and acted upon, Satan has gained his point: his aim is either to seduce or to force you to give up prayer; but be not "ignorant of his devices." Better to persevere in spite of these hindrances than to restrain prayer before God; better to send up sighs and tears and groanings, in the midst of these "vain thoughts," than to "give place to the devil," and thus suffer his evil suggestions to have free and unresisted course. Let us learn the lesson taught us by the psalmist, who, in the verse succeeding this avowal, "I hate vain thoughts," appeals to God, "Thou art my hiding place and my shield." These distractions which he felt in the service of God, so far from driving him from him, only caused him to fly afresh to him as his hiding place, and so oppose the "shield" of faith to the "fiery darts of the wicked."

6thly. Present all your prayers in the name of the great

* See Bridges on Psa. cxix. 113.

Intercessor. He is at once the altar which sanctifies every offering of prayer and praise which we present ; the Priest who appears in the presence of God for us ; and the sacrifice whose sweet smelling savour ascends as incense, rendering our persons and our services acceptable to the Father.

“Through him our prayers acceptance gain,
Although by sin defiled.”

As Aaron, the type of Christ, had upon his forehead the golden plate on which was engraven “Holiness to the Lord,” that he might bear the iniquity of the holy things, and that the people might be accepted before the Lord ; so Christ, our High Priest, who is “holy, harmless, undefiled,” bears the iniquity of his people—bears it for them, and bears it from them, so that through him it is forgiven and not laid to their charge. Therefore he has said, “For their sakes I sanctify myself.” Having then such a High Priest, “let us come boldly unto the throne of grace.”

Lastly, plead for the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit. He is specially promised as “the Spirit of grace and supplications ;” as helping our infirmities, and teaching us to pray as we ought. While Christ intercedes for the believer at the right hand of God, the Spirit intercedes within, though often “with groanings which cannot be uttered ;” and “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,” and will not fail to gather up the broken parts of our prayers, and condescend an answer of gracious acceptance. Pray, then, but not in your own name ; resist, but not in your own strength ; take unto you the whole armour of God ; having done all, stand, and you shall find the promise true in your own experience, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him ;” or, as it is in the margin, “put him to flight.”

M. N.

“NOT OF WORKS.”

“I HOPE I find you better this morning, my poor woman,” said Mrs. M—, as she entered a cottage which was about half a mile from her own residence. This cottage was pleasantly situated upon the sunny side of a hill, and looked as if it had once been well taken care of ; but although the rustic trellis-work in front was almost hidden by the wild luxuriance of the woodbine which clung to it, and the little garden was overrun with weeds, still it was a pretty spot, and had a

cheerful aspect. Its only inmate now was a widow, who looked as if she had been recently visited by sickness and sorrow. Her wan countenance brightened when she saw Mrs. M—, and to that lady's courteous inquiry she answered, "I do feel better, ma'am, I thank you—at least I am better than I deserve to be."

"True, Mrs. Green," the lady replied, "we are all better off than we deserve to be, for 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' as his word declares, Rom. iii. 23; but though it is well to know this, let us not despair, for, if we are true believers, God will accept us on account of his dear Son, 'in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,' Eph. i. 7.

"Be pleased to sit down, ma'am," said the poor woman; "I was wishing to talk to you about these things. I always thought myself good and religious, because I lived a decent life, and went to church regularly. Well, ma'am, when you began to visit me and to read to me, it seemed strange that you should speak to me as one that had broken God's commandments, and needed forgiveness; and my son was often vexed about it as he listened to you, and would say, when you were gone, 'Mrs. M— does not know how good a woman you are, mother, or she would not talk to you as if you were a sinner.' Well, ma'am you know what happened. My poor boy! You know how he fell sick while you were from home, and that it was the fever."

Sobs interrupted her, and Mrs. M— said, "My poor friend, the Lord took your son from you; I can deeply feel for you, and I pray that you may be enabled to say, 'Thy will be done!'"

"I cannot, ma'am; Oh! I cannot. But I was not going to speak of my grief now. He was for some days raving, and did not know me, and he used to say such strange things. 'I am a sinner—it is true enough—quite true!' My poor boy! it pained my heart to hear him! Well, Mrs. M—, his senses came back before he left me. He was so weak that I could hardly hear his voice, though I knew he wanted to say something; so I put my ear close to his lips, and what do you think it was, ma'am? 'You are a sinner, mother, and so am I. What the lady said is true, for God also says it in his Bible. It is there, mother—"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Seek Jesus, mother—seek Jesus; he only can save.' He never spoke again, Mrs. M—,

and can you wonder that his last words never left my mind since?"

"No, indeed, my poor woman," replied Mrs. M—, whose tears of sympathy fell fast; "and I trust you are fulfilling his request. Do you seek Jesus, the Saviour of sinners?"

"I do, ma'am. I am doing my very best. I go to church now twice every Sunday. I read the Bible regularly, and say my prayers, and I am resolved to do what good I can for the future, and live in charity with all men."

"And why do you do all these things?" inquired Mrs. M—.

The widow looked surprised, and answered, "Has not the Lord commanded me, ma'am?"

"Certainly, Mrs. Green; but what is your motive for wishing to please him by obedience?"

"O, ma'am, in hopes he would forgive my past sins and save me; for, as my poor boy said, he only can."

"He only can, indeed," said the lady, opening a Bible at the second chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians; "but this book assures us that he does not do it because of any goodness that he sees in us. Oh! no; it is because 'God is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins' (ver. 4, 5); and again it is written, 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast' (ver. 8, 9). We never can earn God's mercy by our own goodness, Mrs. Green, seeing that in his sight 'all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,' Isa. lxiv. 6. Remember that it was 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,' Rom. v. 8; and let us thankfully accept the salvation which he offers freely without money and without price."

"Well, ma'am, you pointed these things out to me before, and you marked many parts of the Bible for me to read, that I might see it was all so; and still, ma'am, I don't know"—.

She stopped, and Mrs. M— said, "Still you don't know, Mrs. Green, how God's mercy and God's love can be so great as to save us without our doing anything to deserve it?"

"Not exactly that, ma'am; I know God's mercy is very great, but, ma'am, may I ask you this—If God receives us, and forgives us, without our having any goodness, or obedience to his commands, why need we ever do anything that is right, or try to do it; are not we saved all the same?"

"You are not the first who has made that objection to the free mercy of our God," said Mrs. M—. "It was made even to the apostle Paul; 'Shall we continue in sin, that grace

may abound?" And Paul's answer was, 'God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' Rom. vi. 1, 2. The Scriptures teach us, Mrs. Green, that when God, for Christ's sake, receives and forgives us, his Holy Spirit changes our hearts, and fills them with such love and gratitude to him as makes us anxious to do what will please him—not to induce him to save us, but because he has done so already."

There is perhaps no scriptural truth more distasteful to the natural mind than the free, unmerited grace of God in the salvation of sinners. It is too well calculated to lower the idol self to be relished by our pride. Mrs. Green replied to Mrs. M—'s words, in rather a hasty tone, "Well, ma'am, I am but an ignorant woman; still I never will believe but that God requires us to be good, and will not save us unless we are."

Mrs. M— was too judicious to persevere in arguing with a person who was angry. She answered, in a mild manner, "Well, Mrs. Green, study your Bible with prayer for help to understand it aright, and you will be led into all truth; but I came here with the intention of asking you about your plans for the future; you cannot live here by yourself. May I inquire what you mean to do?"

"No, ma'am, I cannot live here by myself; I have no means of support. My boy! my poor boy! who supported me for many a day by hard labour, is gone!" and she burst into an agony of tears.

When the violence of her grief had somewhat subsided, the lady said, "Could not your daughter come to you, Mrs. Green?"

"Alas! I think not, ma'am. You know, Mrs. M—, how my poor Mary, who was once the best of daughters, was led into behaving badly towards me. You know how that worthless fellow, though I often warned her against him, gained her affections till she married him privately. How he got into a scrape, and might have been transported, only he quitted the country. And, oh! you know also, ma'am, that to enable him to do this, he persuaded her to rob me—her own mother, and to go with him! My poor Mary! she never would have been led into such an act but to save her husband from ruin, as she thought; so when he left her destitute in a strange land, and she made her way back to me poor, and sick, and miserable, I received her, and forgave her, though every one said I was wrong. Well, ma'am, you got her a

good place with the rich old lady, where she has lived ever since, as happy as she can be. She could not give up such a place to come and be here with me, where all the work she could do would scarcely support us. Then, to be here, where all the neighbours knew of her disgrace! Oh! I could not expect or wish it."

"You might expect more than that from your child, dear mother; I have left my situation, and I am come to where every one must despise me; but I don't mind all that if I can help you and comfort you." These words were spoken by Mrs. Green's daughter, who had entered the cottage unperceived, and flung her arms round her mother's neck as she spoke them.

When the first feelings excited by this surprise had subsided, Mrs. M—, thinking that the presence of any third person on such an occasion must be an intrusion, left them and returned home. Some days elapsed before it was in her power to revisit the cottage. When she did so, she found everything wearing a more comfortable and cheerful aspect. Mary was gone to make some purchases at a neighbouring town, but the widow received her visitor gladly. "God is better, far better to me than I deserve, ma'am," she said. "He was pleased to take one child from me, but he has given me another whom I did not expect to have such comfort with. My poor Mary no sooner heard of her brother's death than she left her kind, good mistress, who, she says, gave her everything to make her happy, even 'instruction in righteousness' from God's word; and she came home to do her best for me, though poverty and toil are before her here."

"Was her mistress displeased at her leaving her?"

"Greatly, ma'am. The old lady, though she is so good, is of a warm temper. She said she could not do without Mary; that it was ungrateful to leave her; that she would never in any way assist her, and would, at once, alter her will, in which she had left her something. My poor Mary felt it hard to leave her, but she thought of her mother, in sorrow and sickness, and all alone, so she came."

"And how does she think she can support you?" inquired Mrs. M—.

"By sticking very close to needle-work, if she can only get it to do, ma'am. She is a neat hand at it. Still, ma'am, it is doubtful, and we must want many things; but we are resolved to put our full trust in God, and he will help us."

"Your daughter's conduct is most kind, Mrs. Green, and

she has sacrificed a great deal for you. What can be her motive for doing so?"

"Her motive! Oh! what motive could she have, ma'am, except love? And, as she herself says, not only the love of a child to a parent, but deep gratitude for my receiving and forgiving her after all her faults, and when she so little deserved it."

"Can it be," said Mrs. M—, "that she does not believe that you would so freely forgive her ill-conduct and disobedience; and that, doubting the possibility of your bestowing your love upon her undeserved, she is now determined to earn it, and to secure your parental care for the future by pleasing you in everything?"

Mrs. Green looked surprised. "Don't think so of poor Mary, ma'am; you wrong her. No, ma'am, she is not trying to buy my love; she knows she must have had it already, when I could forgive her so readily. She feels so sorry for her conduct that she does not think anything she could do would atone for it, and all that she does for me is from pure love and gratitude."

"I believe it, Mrs. Green; and now, my friend, apply this case to what we have formerly been talking about. Cannot you believe that you may serve and love our heavenly Father, not by way of deserving his mercy, but from pure love and gratitude, because he has already forgiven and accepted you?"

This was a simple illustration of the subject in debate; but it went to the widow's heart at once. She was silent, and evidently pondered it in her mind for some time; then, "I see," she cried, "I see it all, ma'am; 'we love him because he first loved us.'"

"True, indeed," said Mrs. M—; "for, as the apostle says, 'In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him,'" 1 John iv. 9.

A conversation followed on the fruitful and pleasant theme of God's free grace, in which Mrs. M— with thankfulness perceived that the poor widow seemed to have her understanding opened at last to this blessed truth. "And now, Mrs. Green," she said, "I am going to tell you what must increase your gratitude to Him whose care is so constantly exercised over his people that the very hairs of their head are numbered. I have had a letter from the lady with whom Mary lived, and she is very sorry that she gave way to anger on the occasion of her leaving her. She now perceives that Mary did her

duty in coming to you, but still cannot do without her; she, therefore, requests you will both go and remain with her the short time she has to live. She wants you to take care of her grandchild, and she will take care that Mary can provide for you when she is gone."

E. F. G.

THE HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER.

THE people of God are often an afflicted people. Their sorrows form part of the covenant plan "ordered in all things and sure," whereby they are saved. Yet are they a comforted people, too. Hence, whilst the Saviour forewarned the disciples of the trials through which as his followers they must pass, he at the same time promised them abounding comfort. These are his gracious words, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you," John xiv. 18. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever," ver. 16. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," ver. 26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me," John xv. 26. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John xvi. 7. Here is the promise of the Holy Ghost to be the unfailing source of consolation to God's people. Here is the Spirit of God set forth under the most beautiful of his various titles, and in his most endearing character—"The Holy Ghost the Comforter."

Oh, reader! are you among the afflicted people, among those whose sorrows are of a spiritual character? Are you mourning about your soul? Are you without comfort because your broken heart is yet unhealed? or are you sorrowing under spiritual conflict. Blessed sorrow! if it be so with you. God has comfort for you. "Blessed are they that mourn," saith the Saviour himself, "for they shall be comforted." The Comforter is sent, and surely yours is a heart where he has taken up his abode.

But we would direct your thoughts immediately to the Comforter; we would tell you how it is, he comforts God's people; and it may be that, while speaking of him, the Comforter himself may whisper to you his own words of peace and joy.

How is it, then, that the Spirit comforts God's people? In the following ways:—

1. The Spirit discovers sin and bends the heart to mourn for sin; and yet in this his work of wounding, he is still the Comforter: see John xvi. 7, 8. The sorrow he produces is the seed and matter of true comfort. As Joseph's heart was full of joy when his eyes poured out tears on Benjamin's neck, so there is a certain seed and matter of joy in spiritual mourning. They are doubtless contrary to each other, but yet the one may be subordinate to the other, as a dark and muddy colour may be fit ground to lay gold upon. Certainly it is a sweet consciousness in a humble and spiritual heart to be vile in its own eyes; but especially the fruit of this sorrow, even "joy in the Holy Ghost," which sooner or later is felt, renders the very sorrow itself, as the seed of the joy, blessed. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." So it is with God's children. They have their hour of sorrow when conviction pierces their soul, but it is an hour of hope and expectation; and when the longed-for mercy is realized, the sorrow is felt to be as nothing in comparison with the joy of pardoning mercy.

2. But the Spirit does not only discover, but heals the corruptions of the soul, applying to it the precious blood which "healeth all its diseases." And what comfort is there like to the comfort of a saved and cured man? The lame man who was restored by Peter expressed the abundant exultation of his heart by "leaping and praising God," Acts iii. 8; and for this cause the Spirit is called the oil of gladness, because by that healing power which is his, he makes glad the heart that has been wounded and broken.

3. But the Holy Spirit renews and revives as well as heals. When an eye is smitten with a sword there is a double mischief—a wound made and a faculty perished. And here, though a surgeon can heal the wound, yet he can never restore the faculty. The sight is gone and cannot be recovered; but the Spirit of God does more than heal and repair. He renews and re-edifies the souls of men. As he heals that which was torn, and binds up that which was broken, so he revives and raises up that which was dead before, Hosea vi. 1, 2. And this the apostle calls the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," Tit. iii. 5. And what a matter of joy must this renewing be! for thus the Lord comforts his sorrowing people—

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires: and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones," Isa. liv. 11, 12. The spiritual meaning of these words is, that all must be new, newly built up, as for a goodly, costly, and stately structure; and such a building the Lord rears when he renews the soul by his Spirit.

4. But further. The Spirit does not merely renew and set the frame of the heart aright, and then leave it to itself, but when it is thus restored, he abideth with it to preserve and support it, and to make it victorious against all tempests and assaults; and thus he greatly increases the joy and comfort of the heart. Victory is ever the ground of joy. "They joy before thee, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil," Isa. ix. 3. And the Spirit of God is a victorious Spirit, for it is in reference to his agency that these words of Isaiah are applied to the Saviour—"A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory," Matt. xii. 20.

5. But the Spirit does not only preserve the soul, and carry it through all its conflict, but makes it often fruitful and abundant in joy during the conflict, giving "songs in the night" and "light in the darkness." The Spirit imparts to the soul the earnest and foretaste of its heavenly inheritance, and thereby begets in it a lively hope, a simple faith in, and resting on the promises, and unspeakable peace and comfort therein. Oh! when I feel a drop of heaven's joy shed abroad into my soul by the Holy Ghost, and when I am able to look on this as a taste of glory and a forerunner of eternal bliss, how can I but rejoice with joy unspeakable—how can I but say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name?"

In all these respects the Spirit is the comforter of God's people; but there is one more operation of the Spirit, in which especially he is the Comforter. It is his office to seal the people of God "unto the day of redemption," Ephes. iv. 30. By sealing is meant some work of the Spirit, by which he assures a believer that he is God's. The apostle elsewhere calls it the Spirit's witnessing. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," Rom. viii. 16. And what comfort can compare with that produced by this operation? Oh! it makes us sometimes almost forget that we are strangers and pilgrims passing through a wilderness.

But what is that work of the Spirit by which he so assures and comforts God's people? It is manifold.

1. There is a peculiar work, or rather a *peculiar kind and degree* of faith, the Spirit of God producing it, by which we are assured of our interest in Christ and his salvation. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," 1 John v. 10. The believer has in his heart the counterpart of that eternal sealing with which he was given and secured to Christ as his possession. His faith is no feeble faith, for such faith is without the comfort of this blessed sealing. His faith is vigorous and realizing, and in the exercise of it he discerns his election of God, and feels the impression of the seal which seals him for ever.

2. But there is, further, a work of sanctifying grace upon the heart, and this is a seal of the Spirit also, for whom the Spirit sanctifies he saves. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," saith the apostle (2 Tim. ii. 19). But how should we know it? Why, by this seal in the words that follow, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." None are children of God by adoption, but those who are children also by regeneration; none are heirs of heaven but those new born to it. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. This regeneration or new birth is the commencement of the work of sanctifying grace in the heart. This forms Christ in the soul, his image and likeness, yea, "grace for grace." And the Spirit uses the reality and consciousness of this work as his seal; and as the work advances, the seal's impression becomes more strong and vivid.

3. But again; there is a work of assisting, exciting, quickening grace, additional to that of the ordinary or habitual grace which God has wrought in his people, and this is another seal of the Spirit. Now this operation is various, according to the good pleasure of his will. The Spirit is more mightily present to some than to others; yea, more to the same man at some seasons, and in some conditions, than in others. Sometimes the same Christian is as a burning and shining light, sometimes as a smoking flax. The Spirit is like the wind, and "bloweth where it listeth," John iii. 8. Sometimes he fills the soul with fuller gales, sometimes it is becalmed; a man hath more of the Spirit at one time than

another. Now when the Spirit comes in thus, exciting, quickening, stirring, and enabling us to feel and say sometimes as the prophet did of God's word—"His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay," Jer. xx. 9; then with power the Spirit seals and gives assurance to our souls that we are his.

4. There is yet another way in which the Spirit seals. He shines upon the graces he has implanted, and enlightens the soul in reference to them; makes it to know their reality. Of this the apostle speaks, "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," 1 Cor. ii. 12. The things given may be freely received, and yet the receipt of them not fully known. Hence the Spirit, for our further comfort as it were, puts his hand and seal to our receipts. He shines upon our graces, and so makes us to know that we really believe and that we really live. Yet sometimes, notwithstanding this seal, we may be in such a condition as Paul and his company were in the ship, "when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared," Acts xxvii. 20. So it may be for a time that we may see neither sun nor star, neither light in God's countenance, nor light in our souls, no grace issuing from God, no grace carrying the soul to God. Yet in this dark condition, if we do as Paul and his company did, if we cast anchor even in the night of temptation, and wish and pray for day, God will appear, and all shall clear up; we shall at last see light without and light within: surely, the day-star shall arise in our hearts.

5. There is but one more seal of the Spirit which we shall name. There is a work of joy in the soul, oftentimes of great joy. We spoke of joy before as given to sustain the soul under conflict, but here we view it as a super-added seal of the Spirit, to mark God's children. The works of the Spirit are of a double kind. He either works in us, by imprinting, sanctifying grace, or upon us, by shining on our souls and imparting sweet feelings of joy. Habitual or sanctifying grace is more constant, and always like itself; but this work of joy is of the nature of such privileges as God vouchsafes at one time and not at another. Hence it is that a believer may have grace, and may know himself to be in a state of grace, and yet, in regard to comfort and joy, God may be withdrawn. Thus it was with Job. He knew his Redeemer lived; he resolved to trust him though he slew him. He knew he was no

hypocrite; he knew his graces were true. Notwithstanding all the objections and imputations of his friends, they could not reason him out of his sincerity. "My righteousness," said he, "I hold fast; and will not let it go," Job xxvii. 6. Yet, for the present he saw no light from heaven, but he was in a sore and afflicted condition till it pleased the Lord to reveal himself in special favours unto him. Now this experience of joy springs only from a lively faith, and usually comes after many tastes of God's love, and much waiting on him; but where it is known, the soul's assurance is strong indeed!

These are some of the ways in which the Spirit seals God's people; but why is it we cannot know we believe, nor enjoy "joy and peace in believing," without a fresh and new act of the Spirit? Because the whole carriage of a soul to heaven is above nature. Where the Spirit makes a stand, we stand; and without him we can go no further. Without the Spirit's help we can conclude nothing about our souls. The witness of our own spirit is not enough, and is not sure. The Spirit of God must bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. He, by his own act, sealeth us unto "the day of redemption."

Thus, dear reader, is the Spirit the Comforter. And now let us speak to you again. In addressing you at first we supposed you to be in sorrow, in some kind of spiritual sorrow, mourning under your burden of sin, or under your spiritual conflict and trial. Longing that you might understand what God's consolations are, and that they are neither few nor small for his people, we have spoken of the work of the Great Comforter. In knowing spiritual sorrow you are highly favoured, your mourning is of grace; and there is not a sorrow in your heart, not a spiritual trial which you encounter, but the Comforter can and will meet it. O fellow-pilgrims through the vale of tears, let us trust the Comforter. Creatures, things, ministers, friends, books, words, ordinances cannot reach our case. He can;—and oh the blessed assurance! "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 13.

"Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend and bring
Thy light, and joy, and grace."

"Dost thou not dwell in all thy saints,
And seal them heirs of heaven?
When wilt thou banish my complaints,
And show my sins forgiven?"

"Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood;
And bear thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.

"Thou art the earnest of his love,
The pledge of joys to come;
Thy grace shall all my fears remove,
And safe convey me home."

V.

THE KEY AND THE CROW-BAR.

SQUIRE GILLINGS, of Hilton-hall, has lost the key of his strong iron chest; sadly has it tried his temper, nor is it much to be wondered at, considering what it contains.

In the first place, the title deeds of the Hall are there, for he bought the whole estate about five years ago; and then he has money on mortgage, and the securities are in the chest; hardly could they be in a safer place. The squire always keeps by him more gold than I think he ought to keep; but he knows best. Suppose thieves should break in and steal. True, they might have some trouble with the iron chest, but I should scarcely like to risk it. Everybody says the squire is a happy man, because he is a rich man, and perhaps I should think so too, if the Bible did not say, "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep," Eccles. v. 12. And again, "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith," Prov. xv. 16.

Three times has Squire Gillings ransacked his writing-desk, his boxes, and his drawers, up-stairs and down, for the missing key, but all in vain; and now he is vexed, for the steward and the lawyer are to be with him in an hour to look over some important writings which are in the chest. At no time is the squire's temper any of the best, but those who are wise will keep out of the way just now, for he is not in a mood to pardon a fault, or to be very nice in reprovng it, either in his words or his deeds. Already has he spoken sharply to his kind-hearted lady, called the footman a fool, and kicked the old pointer dog because he lay in his way on the mat at the bottom of the stairs. That is a true saying, "When a man

is out of temper with himself, he is out of temper with all the world."

Hilton-hall is in a complete hubbub, for though the steward and the lawyer are come, the squire has not yet found the key of the iron chest. What will be the end of it? Have a care, Squire Gillings, or your riches will anchor you to the earth when you ought to be setting your affections on heaven. Remember what the text says, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other: or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Matt. vi. 24.

Mighty is the arm of Martin, the broad-chested village blacksmith, as he lifts up his big hammer, and brings it down again with a thundering stroke on his resounding anvil. No wonder that Martin has been sent for by the squire. There he stands in the hall in his shirt-sleeves, with a crow-bar in one hand and his hammer in the other, not knowing which will be wanted. See what an arm he has! why it would fell an ox; and look at his broad shoulders! Squire Gillings may make himself easy about his iron chest being opened: but a sad pity it seems to have it knocked to pieces.

Squire Gillings, the steward, and the lawyer have laid their heads together to know whether they could not manage, in some way, to do without breaking open the iron chest; but the time has been all lost, for the squire is certain the writings which are wanted are in the chest, and the steward and lawyer are equally certain that the least delay in the business on hand will be attended with great loss. There is no use hesitating, for the iron chest must be broken open.

"Well, Martin," says the squire to the blacksmith, "this is a bad affair about my iron chest. You have got your tools with you, I see. I would rather that you forced it with your bar than broke it to pieces with your hammer. Do you think you will be able to manage it?"

"Yes, sir," replies the blacksmith, "may be I shall; it must be a curious kind of a chest if I can't get into it one way or other. Sam Martin is not the man to turn his back upon a job like this."

"Come along, then," says the squire, leading the way up the staircase to his private room, followed by the steward, the lawyer, and the heavy-heeled blacksmith, whose clamping tread is distinctly heard every step he takes. I warrant we shall soon hear the clanging sound of his sledge-hammer resounding through the Hall.

And now the lusty arm of Martin is wrenching away with the crow-bar at the iron chest with all his might ; but the chest is fitted up in a closet, and he cannot get at it as he would. So little of the sharp end of the crow-bar can he force into any part of the doorway, that it slips away every time he makes a wrench. There he is, however, at it still, doing his best, bathed in perspiration.

But see ! Here comes the footman with another smith, of the name of Wilson, for whom the squire's lady has sent. He is a short, slender, pale-faced stripling, with an arm more like that of a boy than of a man. He break open an iron chest ! Why, Martin will laugh at him. Wilson has mounted the stairs, and the two smiths are now side by side in the same room together. Look at them ! Why, one is a dwarf and the other a giant—but every man to his trade. Martin is a good blacksmith, and Wilson knows what he is about as a white-smith.

Wilson has taken from the pocket of his fustian jacket a large bunch of keys, and is trying to find one that will fit the lock of the iron-chest. He is now applying a skeleton-key, which requires some skill in its management. Well done, Wilson ! He has given the key a sudden jerk, and the iron chest is open.

Now it is not only when an iron chest has to be opened, but also when the human heart has to be reached, that skilful and gentle methods often succeed better than force and violence. Kindness and love will unlock a heart which anger and sternness have tried to break open in vain.

And now the scene is changed. Let us leave the Hall and go down to the blacksmith's shop ; but, before we go, a short but a sad tale must be told.

John Martin, the blacksmith, had a daughter. She was his only child ; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. She was the joy of his heart, and the very picture of her departed mother.

Alas ! in this world we never know what trials are in store for us. Alice Martin married against her father's consent ; and he, in his anger, vowed that she should never again darken his door. Poor Alice is now come to ask her father's forgiveness, but he will have nothing to say to her. The squire has been drawn to the smithy, sternly threatening the blacksmith, and playing the very crow-bar with him. "Martin," said he, "if you don't open your doors to

your daughter it shall be the worse for you." The blacksmith, in a rage, has set him at defiance, and bid him do his worst.

But now the squire's lady is down at the blacksmith's cottage, in a very different spirit to that manifested by her husband. Oh, she is a gentle creature; a lovable, Christian-hearted lady! I hope she will effect her purpose. Hark! she is speaking in a gentle voice to the blacksmith. She tells him that the squire meant well, but should not have threatened him; it was his desire for the happiness of his daughter, and Martin must pass it over. She asks this as a favour, and she knows that he will grant it to her. She tells Martin that she is sorry for him, for that it must be a bitter thing to a fond father, who has brought up his family respectably, to have his daughter disobey him. "Mr. Martin, I feel for you!"

The blacksmith begins to draw his breath quicker, and his heart swells in his bosom. He hardly knows which way to look, or where to put himself: but Madam goes on.

"God knows that we are all sinful creatures. 'There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not,' Eccles. vii. 20; and when we remember that God hath not 'dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities,' but, in his goodness and mercy, sent his own Son to die for us on the cross, it ill becomes us to be bitter and unforgiving one towards another."

The blacksmith's mouth is stopped, for he knows too well that through all his life he has, more or less, left undone those things which he ought to have done, and done those things which he ought not to have done. The squire's lady proceeds—

"Your Alice, Mr. Martin, was a dear, good girl, though she has, in this instance, acted wrong. She ought to have been guided by her father, who was her best earthly friend; and I say it again, it was wrong of her not to have waited till you gave your consent; but you are not of an unforgiving disposition, I know you are not. Everybody loved Alice, she was so gentle and kind; and when I have seen you both on Sunday at service together, I have thought to myself, I wish every father had as good a child, and every daughter had as loving a father."

Poor Martin is now in pitiable case, for Madam's kind words are tugging at his heart: and the more he tries to look resolute and angry, the more his face turns pale, and his lip quivers.

"If poor Alice has sinned," continues the squire's lady, "she has suffered, and I am sorry for her. I have seen her, and indeed she is not far off now, longing to go down on her knees to beg her father's forgiveness. I asked her if you had ever treated her unkindly, Mr. Martin. 'No! no! no!' said she, 'there never was a better father in the world—I could die for him!'"

Martin is at last mastered. Yes! the strong blacksmith has cried out, with a convulsive throb, "Bring her to me!" and now he is seated, hiding his face with his hands, and weeping like a child.

Let us now fancy that repentant Alice and her forgiving father are in each other's arms, and that the squire's lady, with a happy heart, is walking back to the Hall. Try, reader, to get a lesson from what has been told you; be kind, be forgiving, and never give way to anger and violence.

Let love adorn your actions,
And take reason for your guide;
And never use a crow-bar
When a key can be applied.

G. M.

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

WE that religiously name the name of Christ should depart from iniquity, because the Spirit of the Father will else be grieved, Eph. iv. 30. The countenancing of iniquity, the not departing therefrom, will grieve the Spirit of God, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption; and that is a sin of a higher nature than men commonly are aware of. He that grieveth the Spirit of God shall smart for it here, or in hell, or both. And that Spirit that sometimes did illuminate, teach and instruct them, can keep silence, can cause darkness, can withdraw itself and suffer the soul to sin more and more; and this last is the very judgment of judgments. He that grieves the Spirit quenches it; and he that quenches it vexes it; and he that vexes it sets it against himself, and tempts it to hasten destruction upon himself, 1 Thess. v. 19.

Wherefore take good heed, professors; I say, take heed, you that religiously name the name of Christ, that you meddle not with iniquity, that you tempt not the Spirit of the Lord to do such things against you; whose beginnings are dreadful, and whose end in working of judgments is unsearchable, Isa. lxiii. 10; Acts v. 1—10.

A man knows not whither he is going, nor where he shall stop, who is but entering into temptation; nor whether he shall ever turn back, or go out at the gap that is right before him.

He that has begun to grieve the Holy Spirit may be suffered to go on till he has sinned that sin which is called the sin against the Holy Ghost. And if God shall once give thee up to that, then thou art in the iron cage, out of which there is neither deliverance nor redemption.—*Bunyan*.

A CHRISTIAN MOTHER TO HER CHILD.

THEY tell me 'tis a weary world—a world of care and woe:
Dear child, believe not all they say, I have not found it so,
Since first I learned in early years the God of love to know.

1 John iv. 8.

I have found sorrows, many a one; I have shed many a tear;
Through sickness I have watched all night for daylight to appear;
But I have never felt alone, His love was always near.

Isa. xli. 10. Matt. xxviii. 20.

I have in trouble oft been plunged, and doubted where to tread,
But when I trusted to the Lord I felt that I was led. Prov. iii. 6.
The power of faith has calmed my soul, and raised my drooping head.

Psa. l. 15. Micah vii. 7.

There is a Spirit sent of God, and granted unto prayer. James i. 5. 6.
It shows the way wherein to go, and frees from anxious care;

Rom. viii. 14.

And if it lead through trying scenes, still perfect peace is there.

Psa. cxix. 165.

There is a ransom, paid by Christ, to loose the shackled soul,
To give the bruised spirit strength, the broken heart make whole;

Luke iv. 18.

To free the weary-laden mind from restless sin's control.

Matt. xi. 28, 29.

There is a love that sweetly soothes the lonely, musing hour,

John iv. 19.

There is a peace that keeps the mind when outward troubles lour;

Isa. xxvi. 3.

There is a secret faith through all in God's unerring power.

Deut. xxxiii. 27. Rom. viii. 28.

Dear child, give up thy heart to Him who made thee to be blest;
Let no conflicting doubt or fear disturb thy guileless breast;

Col. iii. 15. John xiv. 1.

The Lord will guide thee, and at last receive thee to his rest.

Psa. lxxiii. 24.

M. H. G.



THE REVOLVING YEAR.

WHEN the heart is susceptible and right with God, whether the book of creation, revelation, or providence be set before it, its emotions are those of wonder, delight, thankfulness, and praise. But though this is true, strange to say, the constant repetition of the gifts of our heavenly Father often diminishes, rather than increases our gratitude. Our common mercies are too frequently received with apathy, simply because they are common. Had we never seen the stars, we should regard them with unaffected admiration. Had we never witnessed the rising of the sun, we should be all but overwhelmed with awe and joy by such a spectacle of sublimity.

A world from an Almighty hand is roll'd
In streams of light and floods of molten gold.

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork;” let us then, while the earth is careering round the sun, and the changing seasons are pursuing their course, take a glance at the animal and vegetable creation, as it appears to us in the more genial parts of our native land.

Scaled up as the visible creation may appear to be in winter,

the breath of Him who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," calls into early being shrub, flower, insect, fish, bird, and beast. Ofttimes in JANUARY the shell-snail appears, and the earth-worm engenders. The ivy having battled with the wintry storm and come off a victor, casts its leaf. The dead nettle, the groundsel, and the primrose, the snow-drop, the daisy, and the dandelion, towards the end of the month in southern counties, begin to bloom. The honeysuckle also then adorns itself with fresh leaves, and the hazel puts forth its catkins. The redbreast and the wren sing, and the thrush, and the blackbird, and the lark rehearse their strains, preparing for the general jubilee of spring and summer. The tender lamb appears while yet the snow is on the ground, and the jackdaw repairs to the village spire.

In FEBRUARY the gossamer floats in the air, spiders⁴ shoot out their webs, insects are seen under hedges, and gnats begin to play their airy antics. A few hardy bees and butterflies venture forth, and field-cricket open their holes. The yellow frog, the croaking toad, and the deadly viper crawl from their hiding places. These, also, are God's creatures; these, when he first created them, he called "good." The willow fairly flowers, and the daffodil walks forth. Partridges pair, rooks and ravens build, the green woodpecker is heard in the woods, and the owl utters aloud her melancholy cry. The feathered race become bolder, and flocks of buntings, linnets, and larks enliven the scene. How wonderful is creation! How much more wonderful its great Creator!

Lord, let me praise thee as thy works appear,
And bow with sacred joy and godly fear.

The wind rises in MARCH, but the teeming earth goes on with its productions. The insect world and the feathered creatures increase. Now put forth their flowers the laurel, the peach, and the periwinkle, the wood anemone and the high elm tree. Berries are on the ivy, and the boughs of the elder tree are no longer without foliage. The land tortoise awakes from his mysterious winter slumber, buzzing flies multiply, trouts rise in the running stream, slimy snakes glide from their holes, and blood-worms appear in the water. The black ant is seen beneath our feet, and the fly-catching swallow above our heads. Goslings and young ducks dimple the pools, the turkey lays her eggs, the pheasant crows, and the peacock butterfly spreads his gaudy wings. Time hastens on, the sun increases in power, and the Great and Almighty

Giver of every good scatters around his blessings on man, and beast, and bird, and creeping thing.

APRIL, as if weeping for joy in the midst of its abundant benefits, while the sun shines, descends upon the earth with showers. The grasses spring up, the wild wood-strawberry flowers, the cowslip, the ladysmock, and the light harebell beautify the banks and the meadows. Bursting into blow, the cherry, gooseberry, curraut, plum, pear, and apple trees delight our senses, giving goodly promise of abundant banquets. Now are seen the flesh fly, and the mole cricket, and black snails, and shell-snails abound. The red ant, the spotted ladycow, and the evening-loving large bat appear; the gudgeon spawns in the waters, and the knight errant dragon-fly, in his scaly armour of green and gold, sallies forth on his adventures. The turtle coos, the nightingale sings in the silent gloom, the cuckoo, herald of the spring, repeats his monotonous cry in the glare of day, and the deathwatch is heard ticking in the silent chamber.

While winged with speed thy fleeting moments fly,
Remember, mortal, thou wert born to die!

When MAY comes, spring is in her prime, with eyes of sunshine, breath of delightful odours, voice of music, and hands that ever scatter flowers around. The mulberry-tree and the walnut hastily put on their leaves. The beech, the maple, and the hawthorn are profuse with blossoms; the flowers of the horse-chestnut, seemingly of carved ivory, attract the eye of the spectator, and the lilac and laburnam, lovely vegetable sisters, bloom together. The flaunting honeysuckle, the elegant foxglove, the attractive corn flag, the blushing peony, and the modest lily of the valley are among the flowers. Cockchafers increase, forest flies abound, honey bees swarm, wasps appear, and moths and butterflies, admiral, orange-tip, and wood argus, and others are numberless. The fern owl is seen, the sedge warbler sings, and the rural orchestra is filled with feathered musicians. Sights, sounds, and fragrant scents afford delight, and fill up our cup of pleasure to the brim.

And now comes a grateful change in human enjoyment, for in JUNE fruits are added to flowers. The cherry, the strawberry, and the melon lead the way with unnumbered luxurious vegetables. The earth abounds with buds and blossoms, Blooming roses, stately hollyhocks, and pinks of all colours adorn the garden, while the fields are strewn with meadow sweet, pimpernel, wild thyme, buttercups, and daisies. The water flag beautifies the stream, the corn poppy adorns the

wheat field, the hedges are hung with straggling and pendant plants, and the deadly nightshade rears its noxious stem. Now the stag-beetle comes forth, the young frogs migrate, the young partridges fly, and the corncrake cries aloud. Hay-making and sheep-shearing succeed each other. In every change of the revolving year is seen the hand of the Iligh and Holy One.

In JULY the days are the hottest, and heat and quietude are abroad. The birds sing less than they did, the little brooks can hardly trickle for their shallowness, and cracks are seen in the footpaths across the fields. The cattle get into the shade. There is an endless variety of minor plants growing which ought to be regarded: cockle, toadflax, and feverfew, eyebright, wild clover, and camomile; horehound, deadly hemlock, moneywort, and star-thistle. The bullrush lifts its black head from the sedgy brook. Currants, gooseberries, raspberries, apricots, cranberries, and bilberries are now ripe. Flying ants become numerous, and bees kill the drones. Poultry moults, and martins and swallows get together in flocks. A change is taking place, and he who in this change sees not Him,

In "whom we live and move and have our being;"
Who sees not God, sees nothing worth the seeing.

Though the year in AUGUST is losing much of its freshness, the goodly, glowing creation is fair to look upon. Plenty smiles around, for our heavenly Father "crowns the year with his goodness, and his paths drop fatness." Among the garden flowers are chinaasters, balsams, Michaelmas daisies, and Canterbury bells; among the field plants, are wormwood, burdock, mugwort, and meadow saffron; and among the butterflies are the swallow-tailed and the black-eyed marble. The brood of the gold-finch appear, lapwings and linnet congregate, flies abound in windows, and thistle down floats in the air. The orchards are laden with fruit, and the fields are ripe with golden grain. "While the earth remaineth," says the word of God, "seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease," Gen. viii. 22. A merciful promise which to this hour has been abundantly fulfilled.

Another change in the revolving year brings in SEPTEMBER, which, if dry, is not an unpleasant season. As we walk abroad, the yellow bloom of the hawkweed, and the golden blossom of the furze bushes adorn our pathway, and then, besides these, we have among other flowers, the starwort,

saffron, and the Guernsey lily. On the high bank of the river, the large green grasshopper is yet heard. The wood-lark sings, the stone curlew utters her clamorous cry, and the wild owl hoots aloud. He who "feeds the ravens" and "caters for the sparrow," has told the swallow to depart, and the woodcock to return to us as a winter guest. The grapes are now ripe on the vine, the bossy hops are gathered, and the nuts are falling from the oaks and the beeches. Great is the goodness of God to unworthy man, for his wants are abundantly supplied; his barns are stored with grain, he has hay piled up in stacks for his cattle, he has much goods in store, and fish for his luxury abounds in the river and the ocean.

IN OCTOBER we have neither the freshness of spring, nor the glory of summer, but a sobriety that constitutes an agreeable change. Hips and haws, sloes and blackberries abound, and the fruit on the elder, the holly, the briony and the honeysuckle, will provide for the feathered race. Truly the tender mercies of the Lord "are over all his works." Insects are not numerous; the dung-beetle is one of the most common. Already have the viper, the snake, and the tortoise, warned by the whispering voice of winter, buried themselves in the ground, and the shrew mouse, and the field mouse have fashioned their nests. The sandpiper goes, and the redwing and the fieldfare come to us. Vegetation changes her dress, putting off her green garments, and assuming her mantle of russet brown, yellow, orange, and red.

As the dew and the descending shower gently fall, so almost imperceptibly take place the changes in the revolving year. NOVEMBER is come before we were aware, and gradually we feel the approach of winter. The golden plover, the widgeon, and the stock dove, have newly arrived, and greenfinches are flocking together. The plover is whistling, and the bucks in the park are hoarsely bellowing. How varied is God's creation, how watchful his all-seeing eye, and how universal his goodness! Mushrooms are yet to be gathered, but the wind is high, and the leaves are falling. May they be monitors to us all, for "we all do fade as a leaf." The absence of verdure, the beating rain, and the gloom that now prevails should dispose us to thoughtfulness and reflection. November is a winnowing season, for no sooner have the mulberry, the horse chestnut, and the sycamore lost their leaves, than they are followed by the lime, the ash, the elm, the beech, and the oak. Wise are they who prepare for the winter of their days.

And now DECEMBER has arrived, the last month of the twelve, the last change in the descending year. Let us give a hasty glance around. It is not all gloom, for the very little show that has fallen gives an interest to the landscape. There is yet a golden blossom on the furze bush, and the China rose is beautiful. Fieldfares and redwings, rooks, jackdaws, and starlings are numerous, and if other singing birds are silent, our friend the redbreast favours us with a song. There are yet leaves to be seen, for evergreens retain their verdure, and the young beeches and pollard oaks part not with their withered foliage till it is pushed off by the new shoots of spring. The moles are throwing up their earthy hillocks, and the December moth has broken from his house of bondage into life. Frost will purify the air, and snow will keep the growing grain from the cutting winds. Welcome then the change.

Though autumn's hues are gone, and winter drear
Spreads his grey tints o'er the revolving year.

Such, reader, is a hasty glance at the animal and vegetable creation, as the earth pursues her journey round the sun. Great is the Lord who upholdeth all things in earth and in heaven, and worthy to be praised.

"How great his power is none can tell,
Nor think how large his grace;
Not men below, nor saints that dwell
On high before his face."

Is this God—the God of creation, revelation, and providence—"our God," and do we believe that he will be "our guide even unto death?" Do we love him and praise him, and magnify him for all his gifts, especially the gift of his Son Jesus Christ, who "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them?" Heb. vii. 25. G. M.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

It was a cold, dreary night, the dismal howling of the wind was heard, and hailstones beat against the window-panes; but this "war of elements" outside did not hinder the cheerfulness of the party gathered round farmer Dawson's comfortable hearth. "To-morrow will be Christmas Day," said Mrs. Dawson, stirring the fire till its bright blaze gave her a view of every individual in the family circle, and she glanced at each with an expression of affection. "To-morrow will be

Christmas Day, and it is a long time since we spent so happy a one as it will be, all of us together at last. How kind of Mary's mistress, and of John's master, to let them come to us on the occasion; and then the joy to see William sitting there once more! Jenny, are you sure that the Christmas pie is large enough? Oh, we must be as merry as we can."

"Yes, wife," said the farmer, "but who can tell where we shall all be this time next year?"

She looked at him with surprise. "Why, John Dawson, what is putting gloomy thoughts into your head? You never were used to hinder people from being pleasant."

"Well, wife, I do believe it would be no harm for people to talk seriously sometimes, for serious things will happen whether we like them or not. But you want to know what put such thoughts into my head, and I will tell you. You know I rode over to market this morning to get the price of my wheat. Well, when my business was done, I was going to the place where I had put up my horse, and one of these squalls came on, so that the hail was beating against my face. I saw some people going in at a door, as I thought, looking for shelter, so I followed them in; but it was a chapel, and they were singing a hymn. When it was over they all sat down, and as the storm continued, I sat down too, and listened to the sermon. The words that the minister began with were strange ones, 'Your fathers, where are they?' Zech. i. 5, said he. Now, I'm not going to repeat all he said, I'm not clever enough for that, though I remember a good deal of it; but somehow it fastened in my mind more than anything of the kind ever did before. He spoke of all who went before us: our fathers, busy and bustling, and striving after one thing or another in their day, just as we are now, till I thought of my own father, and my grandfather too, whom I remember sitting in this very corner. And then, 'Where are they?' says he. 'Their bodies are returned to dust, and the things that they were so busy about are forgotten; but where are their souls, which are at this moment just as much alive as ever?'"

"Where are their souls?" interrupted his wife. "Is it the souls of your father and grandfather you mean? In heaven, to be sure, for they were honest, industrious men, like yourself, John; and you will go there too when you die, which I hope won't be till we have had many more happy Christmases: so say no more of these things."

"Well, let us hope the best for them that are gone; for, as the minister said, we are not their judges," continued Mr.

Dawson, not noticing his wife's injunction. "But he told us, that however good and decent in their conduct some might seem to be, there are but two kinds of people in the world; those who from the heart serve God, and those who serve him not. Now, though I may be, as you say, honest and industrious, I doubt very much if it is not all to serve myself, and not to serve God; or if I ever served him in my life. A few words more which he read from his Bible were greatly in my mind as I rode home, 'Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord,' Col. iii. 23; and he told us to try our actions by it, and we might find out whether we were serving God or not. But he told us then—"

"Come now, John Dawson," again interrupted his wife, "not one word more of what he told you shall you tell us. I never heard you this way before. Sure we ought to be merry on Christmas Eve, with our children about us, especially our Willie, come back safe and sound, after travelling half over the world."

"Yes," cried Mary, "and Willie has promised to tell us another story such as he told last night, of the wonders that he saw in foreign parts."

This suggestion seemed to give general satisfaction, and the traveller was preparing to gratify his friends, when a knock was heard at the house-door. It was opened, and in came a person whose hat and great coat were covered with snow. He requested shelter, stating, that having dined with a friend in the country, he had set out early to walk back to his lodgings at the neighbouring town, when the storm came on, staying his progress till the night was so dark that he lost his way, and was providentially guided to the farm-house by a light which appeared in one of the windows. He was welcomed, and helped off with his dripping coat. They then perceived that he was a respectable looking person, dressed in black, and Mrs. Dawson's good nature soon discovering that his feet were very wet, she insisted on his accompanying her to the farmer's room, where she would provide him with dry stockings and slippers. After doing so she returned to the family circle, when her husband said, "Do you know who the stranger is, wife? The very person I heard preach this morning."

The party did not look as if they were much pleased by the intelligence, and Mrs. Dawson had just time to say, "Well, he shall not make us gloomy. William shall tell his story," when her guest joined them.

On being told by the good woman of the house what a joyful occasion the present was on account of the return of her son, he said, with a smile of benevolence, "I sincerely wish you all joy. May every returning Christmas that you are spared to see find you happier and happier; and I request that my presence may not make any difference as to your way of spending the evening. You say that your son was about to describe something which he had seen in his travels; I shall be very glad to hear it."

Encouraged by the minister's kind manner, William cleared his throat and began: "I am a bad hand at describing, or I could tell many strange things; but I will try and tell you the strangest of all I saw, though you will all be greatly shocked when I do so. You know already how that after I was foolish enough to enlist, contrary to the wish of our good father and mother, I went through hardships, and was losing my health, when Major P., who was always so kind to me, left the army, and got my discharge to go with him as his attendant. Well, after travelling for awhile in the East, I thought we should come home, when he heard of great discoveries that some English gentleman was making among ruins that lie near a city called Bagdad, and nothing would do for him but we must go to see them, and so we did. Now, father, mother would you believe it? These are the ruins of the great city of Nineveh that you read of in the Bible, the very city which Jonah the prophet was sent to, as my master read for me when we were on the spot. They have been covered up, so that no mortal eye could see them for more than two thousand years; and now they are being opened, and such extraordinary things found in them as it will take me many evenings to tell you about: but that is not my business at present.

"While we were staying at a place called Mosul, my master got an invitation to visit a tribe of wild people not far off, and to be present at one of their great religious feasts. Now, he was always trying to find out whatever he could of the ways of strange people, and was glad of this invitation, and off we set. These people are called Yezidis, and one of their priests was sent to guide us to their place of meeting. We passed over a wide, dreary plain, such as you know nothing of in this country, and the second morning we reached the village where their chief lived. He came out to welcome us, with a great number of his followers, and a fine man he was, in a very rich dress. He took us to his house, to the room

where he received visitors; not like the drawing-rooms of great people here, but pleasanter for that hot climate: it was spread with carpets and cushions for us to rest on; and through the middle of it ran a stream of water that was very cool and refreshing. Everything about the dwelling was neat; and it stood in a small garden which was filled with flowers. They soon brought us refreshments, many things which you never heard of; and also honey, and strings of dried figs.

"Next morning, at dawn, we started for the place where the feast was to be held, which was at the tomb of one of their saints. The chief and my master rode at the head, and were followed by most of the people of the village, even the women and children. We rode a long way, but came at last to a wood, and over the trees we could see the white spire of the tomb; and every one gave a loud cry, or fired a gun, when he came in sight of it.

"Well, this saint's tomb is a pretty place, with a court round it, shaded by fine trees, and we were obliged to take off our shoes to enter this court. I saw there a box filled with little balls of clay taken from the tomb, and these were sold to the pilgrims, or any one who was foolish enough to buy them, as it was said that they kept off evil spirits, and cured diseases. It reminded me of what I have seen in Roman Catholic countries.

"But the feast began, and I never could tell you of all the queer things that were done. I never should have supposed that it was a religious feast. They danced, and shouted, and sang, and played on many instruments; and when it grew dark, the priests lit hundreds of lamps, for which the people seemed to have great respect, as they passed their hands through the flame, and then rubbed their children, and their own foreheads with the hand. I fancy they partly worship fire, for some white oxen were killed in honour of the sun, as my master told me. As night came on the noise increased, and though nothing could be kinder than the people were to us, constantly bringing us the nicest of their dishes, and beautiful fruits, still I got frightened as I heard them. By midnight their shouting had got to be a most frightful yell; their flutes were blown, and their tambourines beaten so violently, that the men who played on them seemed to grow mad, and jumped and threw about their limbs till they fell on the ground tired.

"When, at last, the noise died away, and day began to dawn, my master, telling the chief he had business which

obliged him to return to Mosul, took leave, and we mounted our horses and rode away. I inquired as to the meaning of all I saw, and what do you think he told me? These Yezidis are worshippers of the devil, or Satan, and all their music, and dancing, and shouting, were in honour of him."

An exclamation of surprise and horror burst from every one present, except the stranger. "Oh, my child, my dear Willie," cried the mother, "what dreadful people for you to be among!"

"I knew you would be shocked to hear it; still my master assured me that it was true. They think, as he told me, that Satan has so much power to do them harm, that he must be honoured to keep him from hurting them. They show such respect for his name, that they never mention it, nor even any word that sounds like it, and have even put people to death who offended them by doing so."

Great horror was again expressed by the farmer's family; but the minister continued silent, and as if in deep thought. "You are not so surprised as we are at these things, sir," said Mrs. Dawson, "perhaps you knew them before?"

"Alas! ma'am," he replied, "I have known what is still more melancholy."

"What is that, sir?"

"People in a land where a knowledge of the great God might be had, where his blessed word was read and preached, still continuing servants of the evil one, not worshipping him openly as these poor heathens do, but serving him so earnestly as to neglect the worship of the Being who made them, and the Saviour who died for them."

"Oh, sir, what country is that?"

"I fear it may be said of our own."

Mrs. Dawson grew red. "That is an awful thing to say of us!" she cried.

"It is," he replied, "so awful that I dare not of myself assert it." He took a book from his pocket. "This, my friends, is the word of Him who cannot lie; and it teaches us that Satan is 'the god of this world,' 2 Cor. iv. 4; that 'the whole world lieth in wickedness' (or the wicked one), 1 John v. 19. And though we may call ourselves Christians, and be decent, or even amiable in our conduct, yet unless we are loving and serving God with all the heart, we are serving the devil."

"The very thing I heard you say this morning, sir," said the farmer, "and it is a fearful thing; for my heart told me it was so."

"Fearful indeed! my friend, for Satan is a powerful and a cunning being, going about seeking whom he may devour; and it is strange that people who are called Christians should be less aware of the evil he can do them than are the ignorant Yezidis; but we are told that he 'hath blinded the minds of them which believe not,' 2 Cor. iv. 4. By nature we are all under his dominion."

"Then, sir," said Mr. Dawson, "this is sad. How are we to escape?"

"Blessed be God, my friends, there is a way of escape. Hear what his word says: 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,' 1 John iii. 8. 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly,' Rom. xvi. 20. This season has been commonly set apart to commemorate the joyful event of the Saviour's birth—that event which angels came down from heaven to announce, and called 'good tidings of great joy,' Luke ii. 10. Let us examine our hearts and see if it be gratitude for that wonderful love which made God send his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to live and die for us, that makes our hearts so glad at Christmas time? It is quite right to enjoy the other blessings which God gives us, particularly the society of those we love, which makes you so happy now, my friends; but unless the thought that 'unto us is born' a Saviour have, at least, some share in creating that feeling, surely we have too much reason to conclude that we have neither part nor lot in the matter."

"It is true," said Mrs. Dawson in a low voice, and the word 'true' was repeated by more than one of the young people.

"True, indeed," cried the farmer. "Let us, my wife and children, read together that good book, the Bible, which tells us these joyful tidings. I am very ignorant; still I feel that if we serve God, and strive to know him, let what will happen, every Christmas which we live to see will be happier and happier. May God bless you, sir, for talking to us about these things."

"May he bless you and yours, and by his Holy Spirit 'guide you into all truth,' John xvi. 13," replied the minister; adding, with much solemnity and earnestness of manner, "I thank thee, Lord; to me also it will indeed be a happy Christmas, if thou hast sent thine unworthy servant to this family 'to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they

may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in thee,' Acts xxvi. 18."

E. F. G.

"THERE IS NO HOPE."

AMONG the members of a Christian congregation there was a young lady of pleasing manner and varied accomplishments, respecting whose spiritual welfare many were deeply solicitous. She had long been looked upon as having felt serious convictions of her naturally sinful state as a fallen human being, but we looked in vain for the indication of decision for God and reliance on Christ as her Saviour. One day a friend said to her mother, a devoted Christian woman, who was prayerfully anxious for the conversion of her family, "What is Ellen's state of mind now?" The mother replied with a deep sigh, "Ellen says she has given up all hope of ever being saved. Powerful impressions have so often alternated with feelings of indifference, and even of aversion to religion, and her prayers for salvation have been so long unanswered, that she deems it altogether a hopeless thing."

This statement was a cause of grief, but not of surprise. There immediately arose to the recollection a passage of Scripture, which there was every reason to believe suggested an ample explanation of her despair: "But thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go," Jer. ii. 25. It was known that she cherished pursuits and friendships which were incompatible with the service of God, and that she felt them to be so. She was unwilling to relinquish them—determined not to give them up. She "loved strangers," and therefore there was "no hope."

I could sympathize with the feeling; for I remembered having been the subject of it myself. It carried me back to the time of my own struggles with conviction, when in like manner I said, "It is of no use; I shall never be saved;" and it suggested a train of thought which may be of service to some who are conscious that this is their case.

It may be premised that there is a want of hope which arises entirely from the want of clear views of the way of salvation.* The soul, deeply humbled by the thought of its aggravated guilt, can scarcely believe it possible that such guilt can be pardoned, whilst, at the same time, it is its most ardent desire to abandon all its sins. In such circumstances all that is necessary, with dependence on the Holy Spirit, is to explain the way of God more perfectly—to point the

penitent but unenlightened sinner to the cross—to assure him of the infinite power of Jesus Christ, and of his readiness as well as of his ability to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; and to urge him to seek the aid of that Spirit whose province it is to enlighten the soul. Of such a heart it may be confidently expected that its hopelessness will be only transient, and that it will soon rejoice in a "good hope through grace."

But such a case as the one under consideration is altogether a different thing. So far from the salvation of the soul being really the object of supreme desire, there is, generally speaking, not a little recklessness about it, and not a little of the spirit of dogged fatalism. The heart says in effect, whether it says it in words or not, "My guilt may increase, my soul may perish; I may be for ever excluded from heaven. I cannot help it. It is my fate. I resign myself to it. There is no hope." Not only are the most momentous interests thus wickedly trifled with; but, in a spirit of impiety, the blame of that folly is actually cast on God.

The fact, however, in such cases, generally is, that there is something on which the heart is set which it will not relinquish—some darling lust—some beloved pleasure—some pursuit which is felt to be incompatible with the requirements of religion. It would not be difficult to show the bearing of such a preference on the state of mind which has been described.

See its influence on conviction. Under powerful appeals of faithful teachers, or the exhortation of Christian friends, it may be that, for the time, every obstacle to religious decision seemed to be borne down before it. The sinner resolves that from that hour he will seek salvation; he will no longer brave God's everlasting curse, but will seek him as his Father and his Friend. But these impressions soon pass away. Time itself weakens them, and still more does the thought of the cost which is involved in acting out his convictions. He looks on his idols, and he loves them still. Pleasure, interest, his favourite sins rise up before him, and his convictions are soon stifled. A few short days find him as careless as ever.

See the influence of the preference of his sin on the prayers of such a man. Such men do pray, and sometimes with much earnestness. But there is generally, if not always, a reserve. They do not really desire, and therefore do not ask, to be delivered from all their sins. Augustine confessed that whilst he prayed for conversion, there was still, actuated by his love

for pleasure and sin, the reservation—“ But, Lord, not now.” No wonder such prayers are not heard!

There was a young man who came to Jesus, asking what he should do to inherit eternal life. The Saviour loved him. He bade him keep the commandments. He had done so, he said, from his youth up. Our Lord knew that beneath the lovely exterior of that young man there was concealed one of the most insidious and fatal vices by which Satan accomplishes the ruin of the soul—the vice of covetousness. “ Go and sell all that thou hast,” was the searching test, “ and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, and follow me.” He seemed to say, within himself, “ If that be the only condition of life, ‘ there is no hope’ for me.” “ He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” Felix trembled when Paul “ reasoned with him of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,” but he could not abandon his sin. Agrippa was “ almost ” persuaded “ to be a Christian,” but he could not embrace the probable consequences, and exchange his wealth for poverty and his honours for the reproach of Christ ; and there is no ground for supposing that he was ever more than “ almost ” persuaded to be a Christian. Each one of these “ loved strangers, and after them would go,” and for their sake gave up the hope of heaven. And what multitudes have since followed in their steps!

Let those who are conscious that this has been their choice just ponder for a moment the preference they have made. They have preferred the things of the world, which at best are but for a season, and which perish with the using ; friendships which can impart no solace in a dying hour, and no support amidst the solemnities of judgment ; pleasures which never yet afforded solid satisfaction ; mirth, the end of which is heaviness and sin, which will involve a present misery and everlasting death. These are the “ strangers ” they love. And they prefer these things to His favour, who can bestow on them the most exalted blessings ; to pardon ; to a peace which no language can describe, and which even passeth all understanding ; to unutterable joy ; and to everlasting life in heaven ! It is a foolish and a guilty preference, and as such should be acknowledged and deplored. Let them confess it at his feet, and be assured that it will be freely forgiven. There too let them resolve, in his strength, that nothing shall interfere with their immediate and entire devotion to his service.

If so, then, fellow sinner, there is hope for you. Nothing can be more free than the welcome of the gospel. The invitation is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "If any man thirst," was the cry of our Lord in the great day of the feast, "let him come unto me and drink." Perhaps you say, "I believe all that, but this is my difficulty: these sins of mine have cast upon me a spell of such mighty power, that I find it impossible to break it, and I cannot come." Then, for this very reason, go to His feet with the confession of your feebleness. He is exalted to *give repentance*, as well as remission of sins, and he is prepared to give that repentance to you. Believing in him, you will be delivered "from all your idols," and there will spring up in your soul "a hope full of immortality and peace." S. G.

THE YELLOW PLACARD.

THE office, or waiting room, for omnibuses and coaches sometimes affords opportunity for the study of human hearts.

The walls of one little room of this kind are placarded with huge red and yellow advertisements, announcing the various provision made for the entertainment of "the million." Excursion trains, aquatic fêtes, zoological exhibitions, exploding Etnas, horse-races, etc., contend for patronage, and occupy some minutes of waste time, thus promoting the good humour of the waiting crowd. There is a desk surrounded with rails, excepting at one square aperture, which furnishes a frame for the head of the clerk who is perched on a high stool behind it. He there receives your money, and pushes out your ticket, with a little authoritative gesture, suggestive of your duty to take yourself out of the way, whereupon you get a seat if you can until your omnibus drive up.

There are usually more passengers than can be accommodated with seats in the office; therefore two or three gentlemen walk up and down with their hands in their pockets, wondering why the omnibuses do not keep better time, all unconscious that probably their own drays, well laden with beer or cotton, have blocked the way, and delayed the over-loaded vehicle. Their perambulations are generally impelled to the Scotch-reel form, in consequence of two pyramids of luggage which occupy two several stations in the room, beginning with a large crate or hamper, surmounted by boxes and baskets, the apex concluded by a light parcel in cap paper. Three or four little children eating buns, or barley-sugar,

complete a very fair representation of a certain such office, in a certain large town.

One evening, in this precise state of things, a very large placard had been read by numbers who had minutes to spare, and among those who seemed disposed to spell it over with special interest stood a respectable looking man, with whom business had been going on exceedingly well, and who had no objection to a little occasional indulgence. The placard announced a Sunday excursion trip by a fine new steam-vessel, with accommodations of the first class, and refreshments of unparalleled excellence, with other details calculated to attract attention.

"Nancy, look here," presently exclaimed the student of the placard, looking over the luggage, to a middle-aged woman, who, with her dress gathered up from the floor, sat like patience on a monument smiling at delays.

"Well, my dear, what is it?" she said quietly, without moving.

"Just come and read this."

"It's big enough to read from here, and my eyes are pretty good yet, I'm thankful to say. Well, what of it?"

"Why, I think it would be a nice jaunt for us if we were to go. Would'nt you like it?"

"No, indeed, I don't like to be sea-sick; I never enjoy anything on the water."

"Well, I'm a pretty good sailor, I believe, so I don't know but what I may go myself."

And putting his hands into his pockets and jingling some pleasant sounding contents thereof, he proceeded to reckon up the probable expenses of the trip, a process which was summarily interrupted by the lady, who sprang from her seat, hastened round the pyramid, and seized him by the arm, exclaiming in a very audible whisper, "I'm sure, Mr. Smith, you will not do any such thing! Surely you don't see that it's on a Sunday—a Sunday, Mr. Smith!"

"Well, that's the very reason it suits me to go; it's my only day you know," replied Mr. Smith.

"You will all be drowned then as sure as fate," said Mrs. Smith. "I hate water parties altogether, and I know no good ever comes of them on a Sunday; so I do beg you will run no such risks."

"Pooh! nonsense! The better the day the better the deed, I say, and you will do well to think again before you refuse such a pleasant offer."

"I'm not going to be drowned to please anybody," said Mrs. Smith, determinately, "and people who do things they know to be wrong, deserve their fate, and no pity, that's all I have to say about it;" and Mrs. Smith retreated to the other side of the pyramid, meeting on her way the pleasant face of one of her neighbours, who had taken his ticket, and stood endeavouring not to overhear the conversation. But the lady had no objection whatever to being heard, for she considered her cause a sacred one, and her arguments unanswerable.

Now when Mr. Smith had been remarkably successful in the day's business, and felt assured that he was really making money, he was apt to look self-complacent and good-humoured, and even to indulge in a little facetiousness, not altogether congenial sometimes to those at whose expense it was exercised. Spying his neighbour, he drew him toward the spot occupied by Mrs. Smith, and mischievously began.

"Come now, Mr. Milthorpe, I want your opinion; you see I have a fancy to go the trip advertised so temptingly over there, and it isn't often I indulge in such things; but Mrs. Smith objects because it is on Sunday."

"Yes, I do," subjoined Mrs. Smith, "and I'm sure Mr. Milthorpe will agree with me that it is very wicked to disobey God's commandments, and run the risk of your life."

"Stop, my dear, I've not yet stated my case," continued Mr. Smith, smiling. "Is there any more harm in going a pleasant trip down the river, than in pinning up caps, ironing baby's frocks, and going to tea parties?—that's what I want to know, neighbour Milthorpe;" and the floor at Mr. Smith's feet underwent a vigorous bore with the end of his stout walking stick.

The lady's cheeks crimsoned with vexation, at this exposure of her creed and practice, and Mr. Milthorpe was about to reply to the awkward inquiry, when she commenced an eloquent vindication.

"You are too bad, Mr. Smith; you know quite well that I had no time to attend to my own things on Saturday, and I wanted the cap particularly, having bought the lace and flowers on purpose to wear on Sunday; the frock too, it only took two minutes, and I suppose you like your children to look clean on a Sunday, sir,"

"Very much indeed; I'm not making any complaints, my dear—only comparing notes, you know."

"And as for the tea party, Mr. Milthorpe," continued she,

"I'm not afraid of anybody looking into that. It was just a few friends to meet Mr. and Mrs. Waters, who are going to America this week, and I said a great many serious things to her, poor lady; she told me they have some way of keeping the sabbath on board ship."

"Humph," said Mr. Smith, "and can't I keep it there too?"

"No, not if you go for pleasure," replied the lady; "it's quite a different thing,—not that there's any pleasure in sea-sickness. I only wish you had it once, Mr. Smith, only just once, you'd never forget it. You would not like any more water parties, believe me."

"But you have not answered me, friend Milthorpe," persevered Mr. Smith.

"Do persuade him not to go," said Mrs. Smith, "such dreadful accidents happen on the river on Sundays. I shall not have one minute's peace all day."

"Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy," said Mr. Milthorpe quietly. "If thou turn away from doing thine own pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord."

"There!" exclaimed the lady triumphantly, "I knew you would agree with me."

"It strikes me," said Mr. Smith, pushing back his hat, and rubbing his forehead with a mischievous expression of pretended doubtfulness, "that our good friend has swept the work-table, and the ironing-table, and the tea-table as clean as the deck of a Sunday steam-boat, eh? What do you think?"

"The heart is the head-quarters in every such case, my friends," said Mr. Milthorpe in his frank kind tone, which always commanded attention, whether it carried conviction or not. "'If ye love me, keep my commandments,' said the Lord Jesus Christ. We agree, Mrs. Smith, as to the propriety of obedience, but I think not with regard to the motive. The law induces the fear that hath torment, and which inclines to obedience in some matter, disregard to which has sometimes been visited by signal and immediate punishment here, and will receive it hereafter; but only the gospel can originate the love that casts out fear, that delights in obedience to all God's commands, and that hates the secret thoughts of sin which only the Father who seeth in secret is aware of, as truly as the open offence before human witnesses."

Mrs. Smith was particularly glad that the desired omnibus was announced at last, and that Mr. Milthorpe and his sons preferred to ride outside.

The eyes of Robert Milthorpe, the younger son, had scanned the flaming placard, and his ears had heard his father's remark. "Father," said he as they rode along, "do you think people who love God never wish to do anything they know that he disapproves?"

"I dare not say that, my dear Robert, else there would be no conflict, no trial, no overcoming by faith in Jesus. We carry an enemy within, that is always ready to parley with temptations presented by the enemy without; and are thus furnished with opportunity to deny ourselves and glorify our God. You know the Spirit of God is given us to guide our consciences, and strengthen our hearts to resist the solicitations of the devil and our own evil inclinations. God has not sent us unarmed into the battle-field, and we know that a resisted devil becomes a retreating foe, and God's blessing rests on him who draws the Spirit's sword, and presents the shield of faith in spite of the traitorous wish that yearns after the tempting snare."

"Father, do you know James Smith wants me very much to go riding with him next Sunday afternoon; he says his mother won't let him go on the water, but he is determined to enjoy himself on land; and when I said that we never go pleasuring on a Sunday, he said it was praising God to go and enjoy the fields and trees, and pleasant things which God has made."

"God accepts only the praises which are offered in his own appointed way, through the medium of his Son; and it seems to me more reasonable to expect his blessing where two or three are met together in his name, rather than where two or three go rambling in defiance of his command."

"Then you would be angry if I went, father?" asked Robert, with some hesitation.

"You would not enjoy going, Robert, because conscience and disobedience would not be reconciled until practice had hardened one of them into silence; and I should be deeply hurt to see a child whom I have endeavoured to train in the way he should go, turn short round and go the opposite, the first opportunity."

"I will not go, dear father; I am sure you know best."

Sunday came,—Mr. Smith joined the excursion party,

and his hopeful son drove out in a hired chaise with two young friends.

"Now, Betsey," said Mrs. Smith to her maid, in the afternoon, "you may just set tea, and leave things ready, and go out, for if circumstances compel me to deny myself, I always see that my servant goes to a place of worship. Don't forget the text, and be in at half-past eight;" and satisfied with having done a mistress's duty, the lady proceeded to turn the muffins, and to put on the best cap, which respectively were intended to regale, and to astonish the two friends who were coming just to take a dish of tea, and to go away early.

The young maiden having obeyed orders, and profited by her mistress's example, dressed herself to the best advantage, keeping a little extra finery in her pocket to put on as soon as she had safely closed the door, and set off in perfect satisfaction with herself; just popped into the nearest place of worship, where she listened impatiently for a text, which she repeated several times over to herself, and then stealing softly out again, went to spend the evening with some other young servants as giddy and thoughtless as herself.

At half-past eight, she rang demurely at the door, and was admitted by her approving mistress, who was sure the sermon had been beneficial, and demanded the text.

"The ninth chapter of St. John, ma'am, and the forty-first verse."

"But the words, Betsy—I hope you have not forgotten them."

"Oh no, ma'am, 'If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.'"

"Very good indeed. Now get supper ready;—there, I have reached my candles, you need not come to the parlour at present, I don't want anything."

Now after parting from her company, who really had left her early, Mrs. Smith felt dull, and greatly in want of something to do, so she walked into every room in the house, and put several things "to rights," as she termed it, and wondered what she should do next, when suddenly a large bundle of letters and papers which required sorting, and some of them destroying, arose in memory to her relief, and forthwith she closed the shutters, lighted the candles, and commenced operations.

The evening being cool, a little fire was comfortable, especially as Mr. Smith would be cold after his voyage, and there was something so odd in the writhings and convulsions of

sundry long bills and old-fashioned letters which she committed one after another to the flames, that Mrs. Smith quite enjoyed her occupation, and almost forgot to be anxious about the fate of the excursionists. She had not intended supper to find her thus engaged, but Betsey was punctual, and persisted in producing it. She had scarcely placed the tray, and satisfied herself of the nature of the parlour employment, when suddenly, with a loud scream, she darted forward, and tore from her mistress's head the cap which had excited so much interest.

"O ma'am," cried the girl, recovering her breath, "if I had'n't come in you might have been burned to death!" and poor Mrs. Smith, in terror and dismay, perceived that her cap had caught fire at the candle, and now lay decomposing in the fender.

It was not so satisfactory to witness the contortions of the artificial flowers under the influence of the flames, as it had been those of the papers; but there was no possibility of a rescue, and Mrs. Smith was just reconciling herself to the loss of the cap, and the safety of her head, when Mr. Smith returned in triumph, and was beginning to comment upon his enjoyments in contrast with the uncomfortable aspect of his wife's affairs, when the sound of many feet at the door caused some surprise and alarm. In another minute Mr. Milthorpe and one of his sons led in a dirty, disfigured object, whom they were just able to recognise as their son, and in distress looked to their good neighbour for an explanation.

It appeared that on returning from their afternoon excursion, having partaken freely of unsuitable cheer, the youths had been unable to manage their horse, which disdaining whip and rein, had indulged in a frolic of his own, finally overturning the vehicle, and discharging its contents on a heap of wayside rubbish: their poor scratched, swollen faces were melancholy to behold. It happened that Mr. Milthorpe, with his family, was returning from public worship by a circuitous route, after escorting home an aged relative who resided near the spot on which the accident occurred, and poor James considering himself much injured, entreated the kind neighbour to assist him to his father's house.

The first terror over, and inquiries satisfied, Mr. Smith abruptly exclaimed on shaking hands with his neighbour visitor, "What do you think now, neighbour Milthorpe? I think the water party the safest of the three."

"You must not take impunity from present safety, my dear

sir," replied Mr. Milthorpe, "nor be of those who, because judgment is not executed speedily, are fully set to do evil. I fear you are all wrong; forgive me for saying so, but the tree is known by its fruit.

"When I was a schoolboy, sir, I was a weekly boarder, and my father sent for me home every Saturday night. I never kept his servant waiting, I had everything ready before he came, and little did I think about school again till Monday morning; I was so happy with my father all the intermediate time, and gathered fresh motives to be in earnest in duty through the week, in order to please him, and enjoy his society again. Thus I think we should view the sabbath day after six days toil and business; and when we have embraced the offers of love and mercy through the death and triumph of the Son of God, we shall think one day out of seven a very short space for the exclusive enjoyment of his society and service. It will not then be, how far can we keep off from God's presence without getting into punishment, but how close and uninterrupted and affectionate shall be our sabbath intercourse with him."

Mrs. Smith was silent; her lost cap and her son's face were decided arguments on Mr. Milthorpe's side, and Mr. Smith himself, who had known his sabbath-keeping neighbour for many years, was unable to detect a flaw in his statements, or to remember an inconsistency in his conduct, either on a sabbath or week day since their acquaintance began; and instruction backed by example was not, he sensibly acknowledged, to be lightly rejected, or proudly despised. B.T.

HOLY LIVING.

It is amiable and pleasant to God when Christians keep their rank, relation, and station, doing all as becomes their quality and calling. When Christians stand all in their places, and do the work of their stations, then they are like the flowers in the garden, which stand and grow where the gardener hath planted them; and then they shall both honour the garden in which they are planted, and the gardener who hath so disposed of them. From the hyssop in the wall to the cedar in Lebanon, their fruit is their glory. And seeing the stock into which we are planted is the most fruitful stock, the sap conveyed thereout the most fruitful sap, and the dresser of our

souls the wisest husbandman, how contrary to nature, example, and expectation we should be, if we should not be rich in good works. Wherefore take heed of being painted fire, wherein is no warmth; of being painted flowers, which retain no smell; and of being painted trees, whereon is no fruit. Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain. The Lord be with thy spirit, that thou mayest profit for time to come.

John Bunyan.

PRAYER AND PRAISE.

"We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord."

THE first-born rose of vernal prime
That opes its bosom rare,
In gentle sighs of fragrant breath
Doth make its morning prayer.

The summer-bird, on raptured wing,
That cleaves the vaulted sky,
Doth to the great Creator pour
Its gushing minstrelsy.

Rich Autumn, with her fruitful hoard,
Her harvests ripening fair,
The golden sheaf, and loaded wain,
Doth praise the Giver's care.

E'en Winter in its sabbath rest
Adores the King of night,
And every snowflake speaks of Him
Who robes the earth in white.

Thou art his servant, O my soul;
By birth, by choice, by vow,
By bounties of each rolling year,
Prove thine allegiance now.—

Yea, prove it as each passing day
Unfolds its pinions fleet,
By deeds of love, by thoughts of prayer,
By strains of worship sweet.

Make this brief life a song of praise
Where'er thy lot may be;
And learn the language here below
Of Heaven's eternity.

Mrs. Sigourney.

